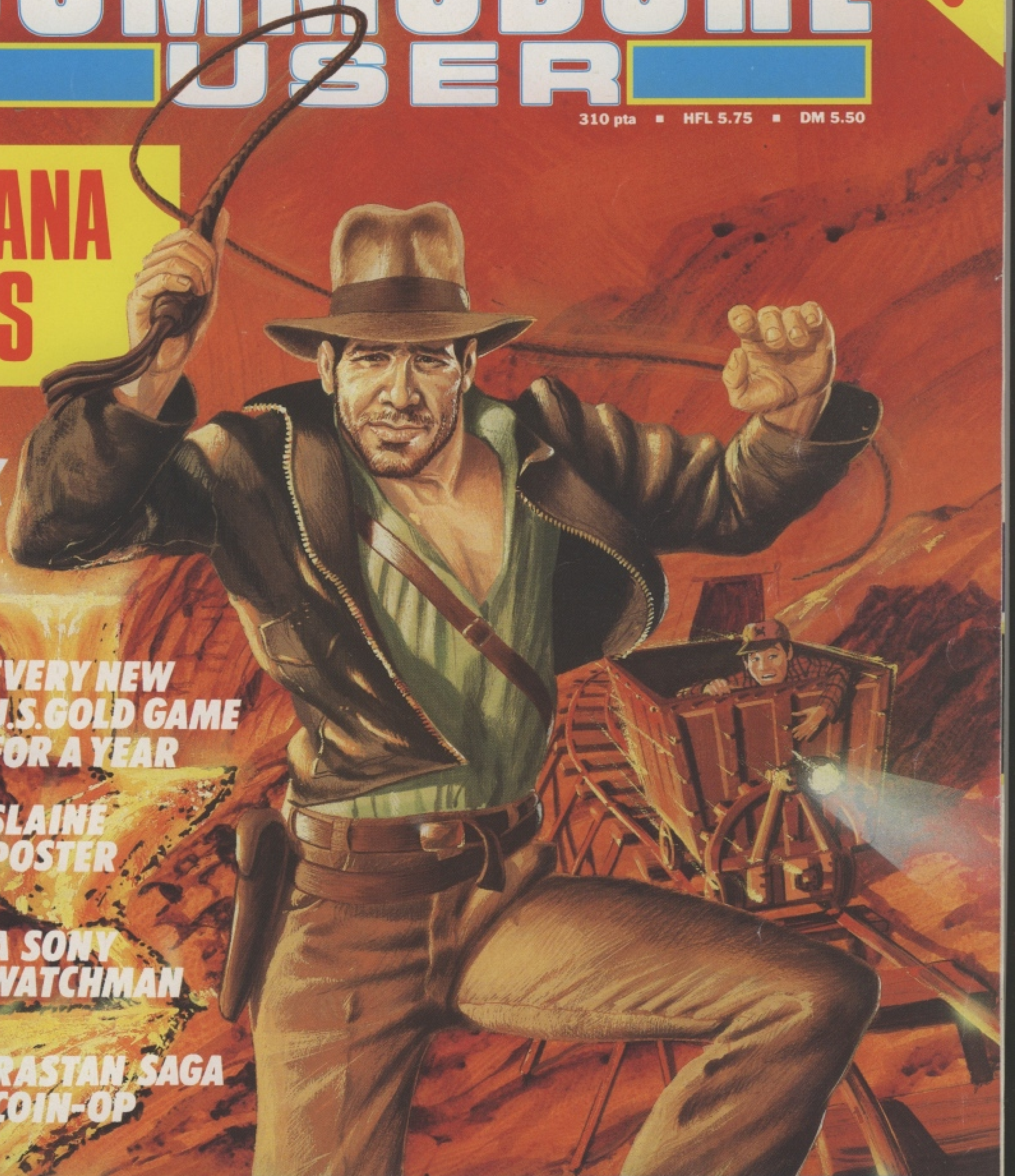
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INDIANA JONES

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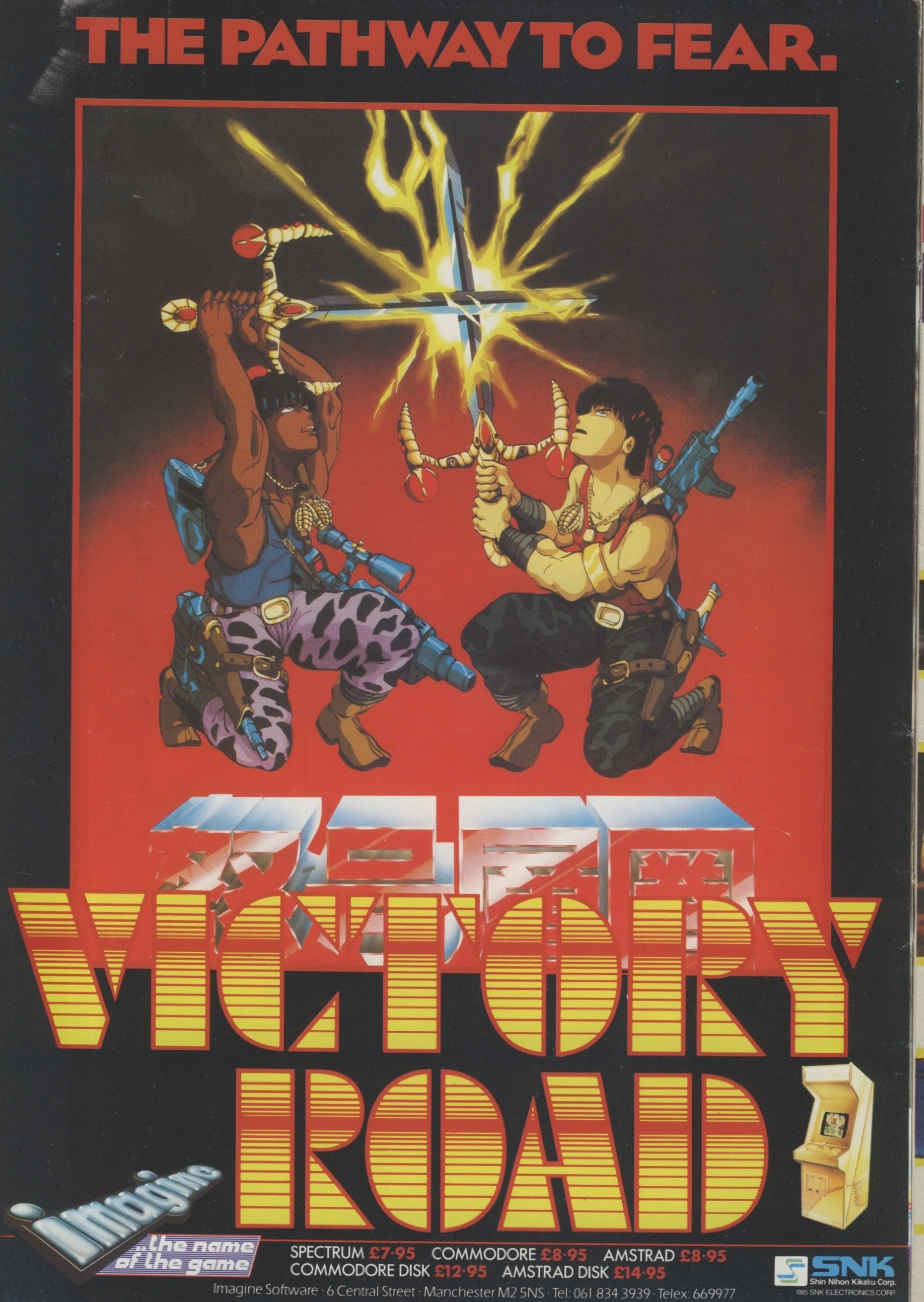
WIN RASTAN SAGA COIN-OP

AFTER BURNER: SEGA'S RED-HOT COIN-OP-WIN A MORNING'S FREE PLAY

REVIEWED: QUEDEX-WEIRD! RENEGADE-DANGEROUS! AMIGA Q'BALL AND GOLDRUNNER-STUNNERS! BANGKOK KNIGHTS-SHOCKER!

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CONTENTS



Big Ed investigates *Bangkok Knights.*

OCTOBER



SPECIALS





Skateboarding booms again.



Bruce Dickinson swaps mic for joystick.



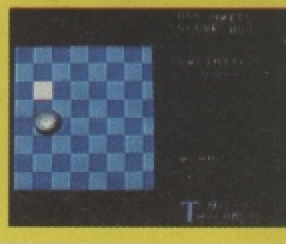
Afterburner: red hot action.

ED'S BIT ON THE SIDE

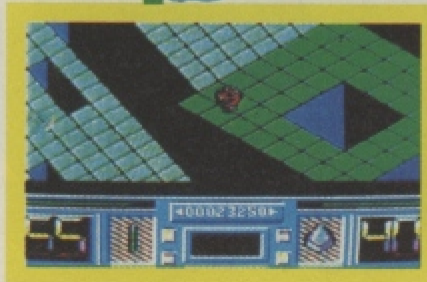
The hardware scene is changing fast. Lots of new machines are coming out and many people are thinking about up-grading. From Japan come the plug-in games machines — shortly to have their own mag named after them. The C16 and Plus/4 are in decline — with all the major companies ceasing to produce games for them. Only the 64 is still going strong — with unrivalled software support from all over the world.

What do I make of all these changes? Well — not a lot of the games machines quite frankly. To me they are a backward step — using out-dated technology and offering no room for advancing our hobby beyond simple arcade games. Better games will need better machines — and that means the 16 bit guts of Amigas and Atari STs. Push me on which is the best of these two and I would say definitely the Amiga because of its superior sound and graphics. But you would expect me to say that, wouldn't you? To C16 and Plus 4 owners I would say beg, steal or borrow the money to buy a 64. There has never been a better time to buy one.

SCREEN SCENE







Red L.E.D — Marble Madness clone.



Q-Ball — Steve Davis goes 3D.

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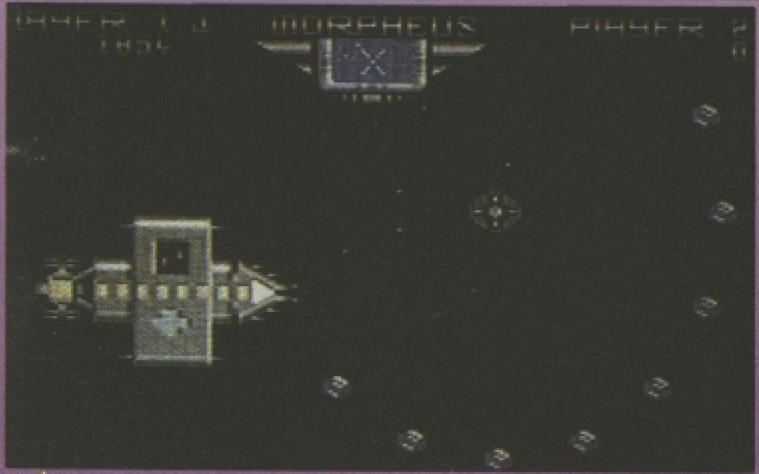
Cover Illustration — Lee Sullivan.

ABC
MEMBER OF THE AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATIONS
64,606
Jan-Jun 1987

BUZZ

AIRBORNE RANGER

'Ere! What's all this? We thought that Microprose went in for exotic and highly-realistic simulations, not arcade-style shoot 'em ups. "We're expanding the bounds of what a Microprose simulation means to the consumer. The biggest difference is that you control the movements of a person instead of a plane, helicopter or submarine". Oh, we see, Mr Spokesman. You're breaking new ground with a quality action game where tactical thinking and lightning reactions determine your fate. You've got to outmanoeuvre and outperform hostile troops. And you're initially armed with a sub-machine gun and hand grenages but you can pick up additional weapons and supplies hidden about the countryside. Well — we just *knew* it couldn't be a *Commando* rip-off . . .



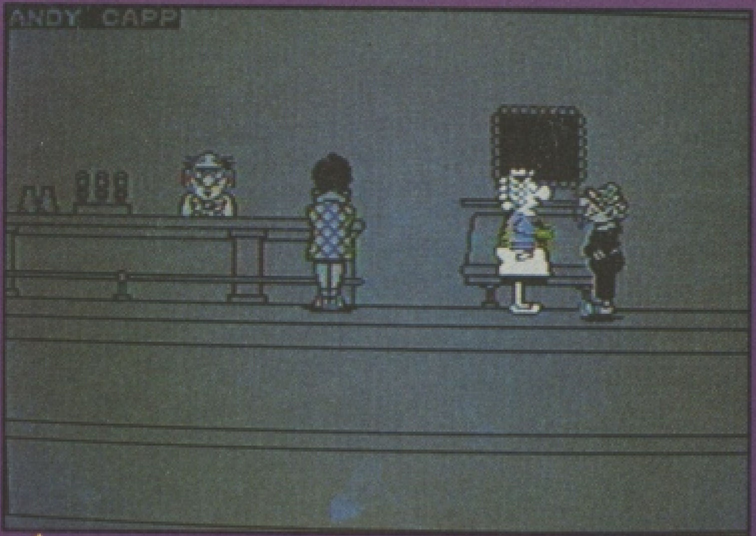


MORPHEUS

"Malevolent morphs, opposing orbitals and stunning space battles . . ." Yup, heeeeere's Andy (Braybrook, of course), with his latest creation, on the Hewson label. Thrill!!! as you guide your ship, armed with its "charge conductance gun" from the security of its holding bay into the great black unknown of outer space. Gasp!!! as you do battle with hordes of horrible grungey aliens who swarm at you. Seek!!! and destroy the death defying orbitals. Increase!!! your points in order to be able to buy the latest systems. Marvel!!! at the "atomic scale" of *Uridium*-maker Braybrook's imagination. Wait!!! — we can hardly.

BUGGY BOY

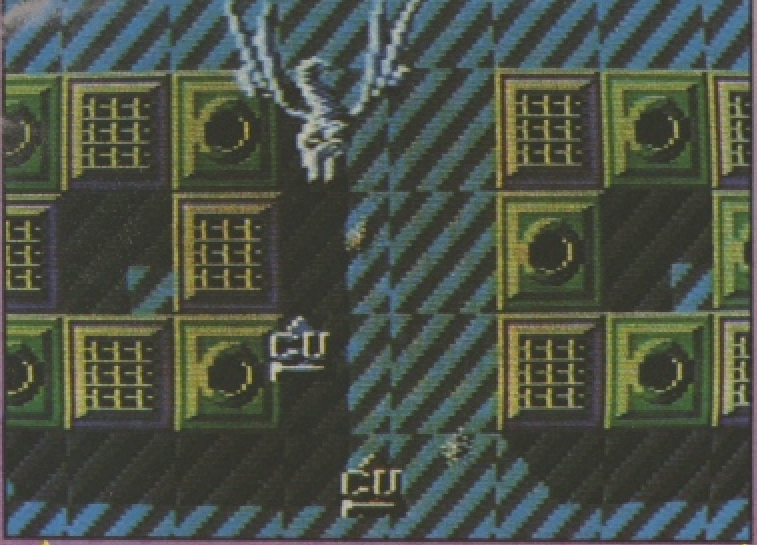
Soon to be bouncing around your 64 screen is Elite's hit coin-op conversion, *Buggy Boy*. You'll be able to drive your fat-tyred motor around a choice of five different tracks, each with five sections. Each section has to be completed within a (v. tight) time limit. The first section or two should be within most people's powers to negotiate, but to have a real chance of completing the track you can't afford to relax. No, siree. You've got to drive like the clappers in order to pick up extra time at the end of the easy sections — without it you're going to find it tough-to-impossible to complete the later sections. There are time bonuses to be picked up too, plus flags to be run over, giant footballs to be bashed and huge boulders to avoid. You can do wheelies, and amuse yourself with various other frivolous tricks — but don't take your eye off that clock.





ANDY CAPP

Daily Mirror readers will immediately recognise the above scene as a moment in the life of that famous barstool philosopher (more commonly known as layabout) Andy Capp. And who better to bring out a 64 game based on the man upon whom Mike Pattenden has modelled his lifestyle than Mirrorsoft. Come early December you'll be able to try your hand at living the Capp way — the object of this graphic adventure will be to survive for a week on the dole, presumably getting in as many beers and as few encounters with the lovely Flo as possible. Now who says that we don't promote culture in these pages . . ?



SHOOT 'EM UP CONSTRUCTION KIT

CU Readers: Is it a bird??? Is it a plane???
BUZZ: No, actually it's a customised *CU* Super-Turbo-Fired-Nightstalker-Aquamarine-Blowpipe Mark II, streaking over an alien planetscape, defying death, blasting meanies, saving the free world. . . .
CU Readers: Wowwww!!! But how . .??? What . .???
BUZZ: Simple. All you have to do is get hold of this fab new *Shoot 'Em Up Construction Kit* from those hairy but very talented folk at Sensible Software, and you'll be able to design you own sprites, backgrounds, movement and even music, it's so simple that even we can understand it and . . . Aggggghhhhh . . .
(BUZZ is trampled to death by shoot 'em up-crazed CU readers who don't realise that this wonderful product won't be in the shops until the end of October.)

THE KING OF CHICAGO

TAKE this, you dirty rats! Take what? Take this newie from Mindscape's Cinemawae label. Yes, it's one of those interactive movie thingies. *The King of Chicago* is set in the Windy City during the famous mobster era, when men were men and overcoats were concrete. The original King himself (Al Capone) has been taken off the scene and now a ferocious struggle has ensued for control of the town. Are you prepared to use violence, intimidation, bribery and treachery to gain your ends? Will you stop at nothing in your attempts to take over and control the seething underworld of 1930's Chicago? If so, *The King of Chicago* sounds like it's for you. This Autumn sees its release on Amiga.





INTERNATIONAL KARATE II

System 3, the label that brought you *International Karate*, (credited by *CU* as the greatest karate beat 'em up yet,) have just announced the impending release of a follow-on with still more scintillating features. You'll now find yourself pitted against not one but two computer-controlled players. Alternatively, if you choose the two-player option, you, your mate and the computer will take part in a glorious three-way free-for-all. New animated backgrounds, a range of additional moves (including double head-kick and a spectacular backflip) and the peril of the bouncing balls (?!?? — Ed) are among the extras on offer, and apparently a jab on the pause button will treat you to a brief display of dancing by five onscreen fighters to the stirring strains of the original *I.K.* theme tune as re-mixed by Rob Hubbard. Bigger? Better? Bouncier? Find out in October.



SLAINE

Slaine, based on the adventures of the charming but very violent ancient Celtic hero from the pages of *2000AD*, features a new gameplaying concept which Martech have christened The Reflex System. The basic idea is that you, the player, are actually beamed into the mind of the character onscreen, and have to do his thinking for him. The text section of the screen tells you about the situation in which Slaine finds himself, while on the left-hand side of the screen different options scroll rapidly from left to right, representing the thoughts that are flashing through his mind. Using the disembodied hand-style cursor, you've got to pick the best option for Slaine's survival and happiness — but miss that thought, or pick the wrong one and you could be in BIG trouble. Personally, we're not really sure whether we'd like to climb into Slaine's mind — sounds like a pretty warped place!

BUZZ

BUZZ

GOLDEN OLDIES

What with the current rage for reminiscing about the stars of yesteryear (y'know, "it was twenty years ago today", etc.) It's perhaps not a major surprise to discover a software company eyeing up some of those much-loved characters with a view to putting them in a game. In fact, US Gold have just announced their acquisition of not one but *three* big names from the silver screen – Marilyn Monroe, James Dean and Charlie Chaplin.

The first of the three resulting games on the market will be the one starring the lovable tramp hero of the silent movie days. *Charlie Chaplin* (the game) will allow you to direct your very own silent movie, featuring the twenties star. You'll be able to choose the script, select the scenery and props and put together a strong supporting cast. You'll have all the headaches associated with trying to get a movie out within budget. The final test will come when your filmed and edited epic is shown to the first night audience. Will they love it? Or will it receive a critical panning? This intriguing merging of slapstick fun and hard-headed financial strategy is due for release this month.

The other two products are not due for release until early next year, and it isn't yet clear quite how US Gold will choose to incorporate these two charismatic and rather tragic figures into computer game format. Will you have to try to find the secret of Marilyn's mysterious death? Will the James Dean game feature a car chase sequence? We don't know yet, but we'll keep you posted on developments.



Marilyn — shortly appearing in pixels.



Rebel without a game, yet.

PINK WHISPERS

"Dead ant, dead ant, dead ant dead ant dead ant, dead ant dead aaaant..."
Why, good morning Ms. P. R. Person, nice to see you. My, what a pretty little ditty that is that you're humming and – ooh, what can this be? It's a very mysterious wee press release from those Ariolasoft people with a picture of none other than The Pink Panther on the cover! Ms. Person! Are you trying to drop some kind of a hint?
"Ooooh... no, sorry can't say a word!"
But what are we to think? Surely you can't be suggesting that there's going to be a fab new game coming out featuring that fantabulous feline, that pink paragon, that best-loved of cartoon characters?

"No comment, I'm afraid. You'll just have to wait and see."
Oh dear! Looks like we'll just have to draw our own conclusions then. And our conclusion is that there is going to be a new Ariolasoft game, featuring the Pink Panther and, it wouldn't surprise us in the least if Inspecteur Closeau was too involved too.

"I'm not saying anything."
Funny. And we were sure we saw your lips move...

Charlie Chaplin — another dead star goes soft.





It's all smiles as Commodore hand over a 1.2m cheque and become official Chelsea FC sponsors for the next three years. You can't help wondering if Kerry Dixon (Back row, sixth from left) will be worried that the management will use the dosh to buy a new striker — considering his lack of goals so far this season.

EA UP CHUCK!



▲ Actor Sam Shepherd as Chuck Yeager in the film the Right Stuff.

Soon to be in your local software shop is Electronic Arts' new flight simulation which has been developed with the assistance of Chuck Yeager, the American test pilot who became the first man to break the sound barrier, and whose exploits were celebrated in the brilliant film of a few years back The Right Stuff, which starred Sam Shepherd (pictured above) as Yeager.

The simulation will feature three levels of onscreen instruction from General Yeager, teaching the would-be pilot (you) skills ranging from basic take-off and landings to formation flying and acrobatic stunts. You can also make use of the Test Pilot Option to check out a selection of fourteen different aircraft and how they handle, "using actual test pilot evaluation charts" (*??? – Ed*). Among the planes included are the Bell X-1 (the plane Chuck used when he broke the sound barrier), historic machines like the Sopwith Camel, the Spad XIII and the P-51 Mustang, and more modern aircraft like the SR-1 Blackbird, the F-16 and the F-18. There are even three experimental planes to be checked out and an Airplane Racing option.

With a super-fast frame rate to really give an impression of the thrill of mach-speed flight, and the benefit of ol' Chuck's years of experience in the cockpit, *Chuck Yeager's Advanced Flight Trainer* looks like a sure-fire hit with sim fans everywhere.

GATHERED GOODIES

In the run up to Christmas, there are several excellent compilation packs due to appear on the shelves of your local software emporium.

Retailing at £12.95 (for 4 cassettes) or £17.95 (for 2 disks), Ocean's *Game Set & Match* features ten games comprising a staggering twenty-two sporting events. Included are such favourites as *Barry McGuigan's Boxing, Daley Thompson's Supertest, Match Point, World Series Baseball, Jonah Barrington's Squash, Basketball, Hyper Sports, Ping Pong, Snooker* and, by way of a bonus, an as-yet-unreleased game called *Super Soccer*.

And when you've tired of playing various sports, you might like to try your hand at some of the games included in US Gold's *Solid Gold* set, which will feature *Gauntlet, Ace of Aces, Leaderboard, Infiltrator* and *Winter Games*. At 9.95 (cassette) this looks like a pretty good deal.

Finally, if you're not yet suffering from Byte-out, you might consider shelling out what remains of your hard-earned on the Swedish-based Action's compilation of top-selling games in Sweden, *4 Action Hits*, which includes *Soldier One, Captured, '43* and *Blood'n'Guts* and costs £9.95 (cassette) and £14.95 (disk).

Footy Manager II

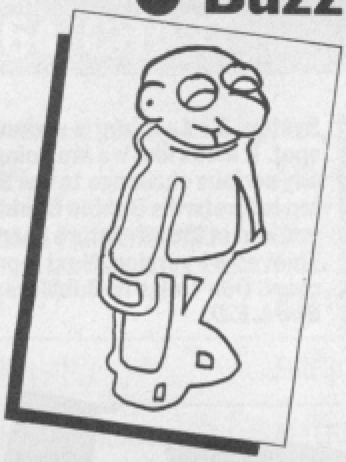
Football Manager II is due for launch as we go to press in the presence of football personality Ron Atkinson — the controversial ex-manager of Manchester united and new manager of West Bromich Albion.

The game offers a wealth of improvements including end to end play instead of goal mouth only action of the original. An animated score board keeps track of the goals and records the crowd attendance.

You can head-hunt foreign starts just like Tottenham Hotspur and Newcastle and choose your favourite side from all four divisions.

Addictive claim that the strategy element of the game has been improved by enabling you to allocate different styles of play to individual players.

The game is on sale now for the Commodore 64 at £9.95 cassette and £14.95 disk. An Amiga version will follow shortly at £19.95.



***It never rains...*: White Smoke has been spotted rising over Rainbird's HQ. After nigh on two years hard slogging by Sandy White and Angela Sutherland, *Dick Special: The Search For Spook* is due to hit the shelves this side of Christmas. Dick, according to his creators "the first ever fully animated cartoon character to be controlled by the player", is on a mission to free Spook, his dognapped friend. By all accounts a masterpiece of programming with truly wonderful graphics.**

BUZZ

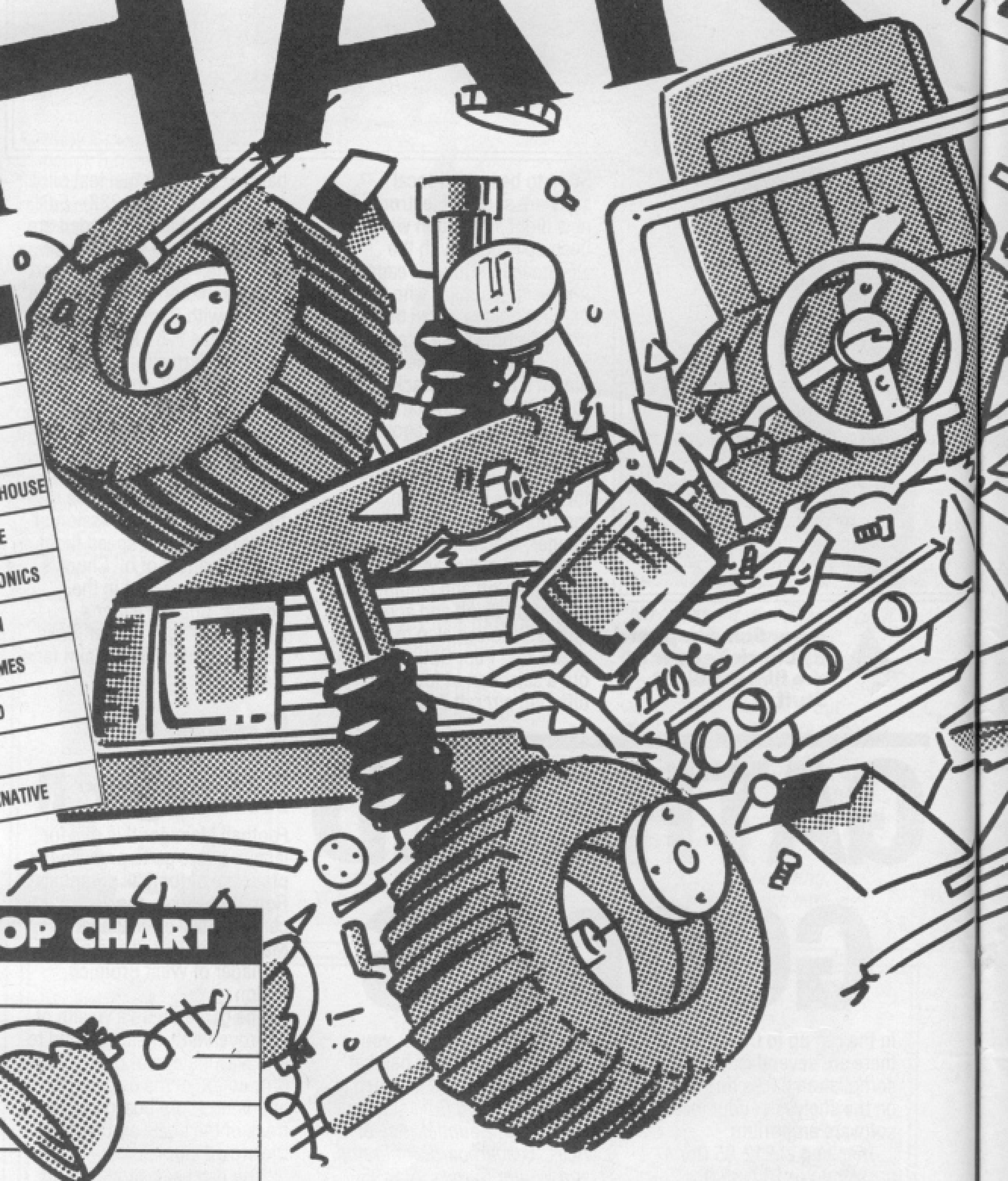
***Sneaky Plane*: Microprose have just announced the release of *Stealth Fighter*, a sim based on a USAF aircraft which officially does not exist! This radar-elusive stealth fighter is currently believed to be at testing stage, and, despite, the veil of secrecy which surrounds the whole project, Wild Bill's men have carried out extensive research and now feel confident that they have "a fair idea of the capabilities of the plane".**

***Splashy Ball!*: Meanwhile, Gremlin have just let us know of the impending release of *their* latest simulation. *Water Polo*, which requires the player to have "the skills of a footballer, the physical endurance of an athlete and the tactical brain of a cricketer". Happily, we understand that the patience of the long-distance walker will not be required!**

***Gold Sequels*: The coming months will see the release by US Gold of several sequels to popular hits. First off the block is likely to be *Infiltrator II*, due to hit the shops this month, closely followed by the eagerly-awaited *Gauntlet II*, and early December should see the release of *Impossible Mission II*.**

CHART

System 3's *Last Ninj* is undoubtedly the best selling game of the year so far — still hanging on at the number one spot. It looks like we are going to have to wait a month or so for the big Autumn coin-op launches to bring any serious challenge to the System 3 title. A likely contender to knock the Ninja game off the top is Firebird's Bubble Bobble. Magnetic Scrolls are still holding on to the number one slot in the adventure chart despite a mixed reception for the Guild of Thieves 64 version. Next month's charts will feature an Amiga chart. Don't miss it. Bubblers: *Quedex, Renegade, Red L.E.D.*



ADVENTURE CHART

TM	LM		
1	4	GUILD OF THIEVES	RAINBIRD
2	1	KILLED UNTIL DEAD	US GOLD
3	3	SHADOWS OF MORDOR	MELBOURNE HOUSE
4	2	STAR WRECK	ALTERNATIVE
5	3	KOBYASHI	MASTERTRONICS
6	7	PORTAL	ACTIVISION
7	NE	SYDNEY AFFAIR	INFOGRAMES
8	5	MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE	US GOLD
9	6	FRANKENSTEIN	CRL
10	10	LIFE TERM	ALTERNATIVE

READERS COIN-OP CHART

1. OUTRUN
2. DOUBLE DRAGON
3. ROAD RUNNER
4. R-TYPE
5. BUBBLE BOBBLE

So OUTRUN hangs on to the top spot for another month, but not without a very strong challenge from DOUBLE DRAGON. ROAD RUNNER keeps number three spot, but will it be able to keep R-TYPE down much longer? We doubt it. Meanwhile, our Tony Cottee feature clearly jogged a few memories to bring oldie-but-goldie BUBBLE BOBBLE into the fifth position. Send your top five coin-ops list to COIN-OP CHART, COMMODORE USER, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU. If your top five tallies with the average, you'll receive one of our thermo-nuclear CU T-Shirts.

REVIEWERS CHOICE

What games have been thrilling us for the last four weeks? The CU reviewers name their hottest plays:

EUGENE LACEY: Road Runner, Mega Apocolypse, Bubble Bobble.
NICK KELLY: California Games, APB, Heavy Metal Meltdown (pinball).
MIKE PATTENDEN: California Games, Bubble Bobble, Monte Carlo (pinball).
FRANCIS JAGO: Karate Kid II, Winter Games, World Games.
FERDY HAMILTON: Star Paws, Bubble Bobble, California Games.
MARK PATTERSON: Barbarian (Psygnosis Amiga), Defender of the Crown, Gryzor.



C64 CHART

TM	LM		
1	1	LAST NINJA	SYSTEM 3
2	2	WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD	ACCESS/US GOLD
3	4	KIK START 2	MASTERTRONIC
4	NE	DECATHLON	FIREBIRD
5	NE	CRICKET INTERNATIONAL	ALTERNATIVE
6	5	I BALL	FIREBIRD
7	NE	ACE 4	CASCADE
8	NE	BMX SIMULATOR	CODE MASTERS
9	3	ROAD RUNNER	US GOLD
10	12	DEFENDER OF THE CROWN	MIRRORSOFT
11	13	EPXY EPICS	EPYX-US GOLD
12	5	BARBARIAN	PALACE
13	9	RUN FOR GOLD	ALTERNATIVE
14	7	MILK RACE	MASTERTRONIC
15	NE	DESTRUCTO	BULLDOG
16	10	FOOTBALL MANAGER	ADDICTIVE
17	NE	SUPER ROBIN HOOD	CODE MASTERS
18	NE	RIVER PLATE	FIREBIRD
19	11	WIZBALL	OCEAN
20	NE	EDDIE KID JUMP CHALLENGE	RICOCHET

BOTTOM TEN WORST TV PROGRAMMES

1. **Songs of Praise — reach for the remote control.**
2. **Prisoner Cell Block H — criminal Aussie soap.**
3. **Highway — make sure you don't turn to this when you turn off Songs of Praise.**
4. **Points of View — Oh why, oh why, must the BBC persist with this?**
5. **Bullseye — Jim Bowen deserves to be forced to watch Songs of Praise for ever more.**
6. **Micro Live — a better title would be 'Putting Your Computer to Sleep'.**
7. **Crossroads — why did it take so long to put the axe to Kings Oak?**
8. **Young Doctors — not worth skiving off school for.**
9. **Little and Large — large on boredom little on entertainment.**
10. **Juliet Bravo — she's so vomit-makingly sensible.**

C16 CHART

TM	LM		
1	2	SABATEUR	ALTERNATIVE
2	3	GUN LAW	MASTERTRONIC
3	5	XADIUM	MASTERTRONIC
4	1	PAPERBOY	ELITE
5	4	FOUR GREAT GAMES	MICRO VALUE
6	7	BATTLE	MASTERTRONIC
7	NE	SEA FORCE NOVA	MASTERTRONIC
8	NE	AUTORUNE	PLAYERS
9	9	TERRA NOVA	ANCO
10	NE	INDOOR SOCCER	ALTERNATIVE

Letters

Kelly's crime

For Nick Kelly's punishment (Hotheads – Oct) I would make him drink Dr Pepper for a week, play *Ninja Master*!!! for 23⅞ hrs a day and also watch that little basxxxx of a gopher on Roland Rat everyday for a year.
Wilf "Kill the Gopher" Henderson
Angus, Scotland.

Pirates

A quick word from a small scale pirate: I'm a hard kind of a pirate; the sort that pirates all progs including budget games, but I'm not a bad man – 70% of my pirates are programs unattainable any other way – tell me how else do you get stuff like *Inspector Gadget* (Sniff), *Arcade Gremlins, Track & Field, Swinth, Battle Zone, Frogger II, 3 Deep* and hacks such as *Who Dares Wins III, Int. Soccer III*, etc. etc?

Now, three tips to software companies to prevent large scale pirating of your titles:

1. Adopt the Pava loader system used on *Way of the Exploding Fist & Rock 'n' Wrestle.* That will stop the tape to tapers.
2. Adopt old Ultimates Commodore approach, ie make the games so bad that nobody will want to pirate them.
3. Note that the expert cart sets 54296 often to 15 and 0 to 0. A little random check for that and a corruption routine should remedy the problem of pirates there.

Last thing please. Shoot-em ups are boring. And somebody good get down to a conversion of All Points Bulletin. It's the best thing since C.U.
Captain Atari.
Anyone still listening?

Video jock

I am writing to comment on your July issue of C.U. where on page 82, your feature was a map of arcades in Britain or should I say England, Ireland and Wales. I feel as a British person (and proud to be one) that I have to criticise you on only showing one arcade in Scotland, this one being the 'Video Express' in Fort William.

There are of course a lot more arcades in Scotland worthy of your noted and appreciated reviews. Two examples of these being 'Treasure Island' in Portobello, Edinburgh, and the 'Leisure Arcade' in the tourist centre at Aviemore. Up for grabs at these two arcades are machines such as *Gauntlet 2, Rolling Thunder, Nemesis, Spy Hunter 2, Out Run* and *Road Blasters*.

P.S. Please print this letter because I am sure a lot of other Scots who do get C.U. would agree with me entirely.
Joseph Gray,
West Lothian, Scotland.
The trouble with attempting something like our map is the number of inevitable omissions. Consider Scotland redressed. Anyone else?

Portuguese pastime

I was in the Algarve at the same time as you and, you reported in 'Ed's bit on the side' that there were no coin-ops in the Algarve. But while I was there I went past *three* arcade centres, and also I found in the basement of the Hotel opposite our villa a Commodore shop where for four hundred escudos you could have a full hour of enjoyment playing on a Commodore 64 or Amiga. With a choice of 40 different games on disk. So next time Ed, look a bit harder.

P.S. I've just got over my sunburn blisters too!
Gareth Pitt,
Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands.
What Eugene meant what there was no coin-op in the Geordie pub in Corvoero actually.

Coin-op contribution

Recently I have visited Yarmouth and tried the arcades there. Also recently I have read your June edition which showed a map of all of the arcades in Britain. Although Yarmouth has a good arcade I have found some just as good which were NOT mentioned on your map. Have you ever been to Wells-next-the-sea?

It has a brilliant arcade with titles like: *Out Run, R Type, Double Dragon, Gauntlet, Bubble Bobble, Rolling Thunder, Soldier of Light, Hang-On, Super Sprint* and many others. Also I think Hunstanton in Norfolk has a decent arcade with Indiana Jones and the *Temple of Doom, Out Run* and a few others. And last of all I'd like to thank C.U. for an excellent mag.
Martin Moore,
Fakenham.
Been there? We've never even heard of it! Still everyone knows now…

Complaint

I have been reading C.U. for 2 years now, and feel duly qualified to write my first complaining letter (no, it's not about Mike Pattenden).

It's just to complain about all the letters on your page complaining about everything.
Mike Benson,
Camberley, Surrey.
Well, we'd just like to complain about you complaining about the complaints.

Whaa?

Please could I have your address.
D. Piesse,
Skene, Aberdeen.
??????????

Pricing

I have written to you before but you never publish any of my letters. Anyway this letter is not to moan but to tell you that you have missed out putting the price on two of your games. I mean you do have a word processor, don't you?
Jason Hassam,
Stepney, London.
Word processor? You must be kidding! We have to write with a John Bull printing kit here. As for the prices, we know (groan).

Multi-load

I have read many letter sections in many magazines criticising multi-loaders. I support multi-loaders to a certain extent, but I think it's a bit extreme when you have to reload the whole game. It's a pity no other software company have followed Software Projects example in *Dragon's Lair*.

I have bought *Gunship* and despite the amount of loading between sections. I still think it is brilliant, after all, once you've just blasted loads of commie armoured vehicles, you could go and make yourself a nice cuppa while the next section loads.

Congrats on your Play to Win section. Loved your Last Ninja map. When will you be making another Play to Win booklet?
Peter Morgan,
Jersey.
Software Projects multi-load system made excellent sense.

Why no-one else adopts it we don't know. Come on you lot – listen!

Smart arse

I am not trying to be a smart-arse but I would like to point out that last months 'TOMMY'S TIPS' may have been misleading and I would like to point out that sprite date cannot be read from locations 4096 to 8192 because the video chip doesn't 'see' this memory. Young Tombo probably knew this anyway, but M. Sampson didn't and he probably made his sprite get data from 4096 and thought where the bloody hell is my sprite?'.

O.K. that's that, now for something completely different.
1. Keep printing Tommy's Tips despite having hundreds of letters from selfish readers complaining about technical features.
2. Please stop printing letters from people complaining that their view on a game is different to yours. What a load of wallies, different games suit different people.
3. Don't you think that people who write to you complaining about small things such as the *Game Over* advert are a bit tapped?
4. I recently played *Out Run* in the arcades and thought it was the best thing since sliced bread, a little bird tells me that US Gold are planning a 64 version, how stupid could they be. There are many things about *Out Run* that the 64 couldn't even dream of producing, the mega stereo soundtrack and fx, the hydraulics, the super fast, ultra detailed graphics. So why do they bother?.
5. How about more 'Computer Magic'?
6. Goodbye!

J. G. Homer,
Sawley, Notts.

1. Get rid of Tommy – perish the thought!
2. We don't mind if people complain about our reviews. We're not (quite) infallible
3. Tapped? Not understand what you mean...
4. Absolutely no comment
5. Unlikely
6. Goodbye to you too

BMX banter

In your review of *California Games*, Ferdy H. said, "Everyone, yes I mean everyone, has at one point been into BMX." I would like to say that I must be the only one who hasn't. In fact I've never even been on one.

After reading the Amiga advert on its fantastic music, why doesn't someone bring out an audio tape of some Amiga songs and sell it (at a reasonable price).

Anthony Byng
Bromsgrove.

Never been on a BMX, phew you've been deprived.

Rap playback

I am delighted to see that your are devoting more and more space in your already brilliant magazine to the Amiga, thus making it even more brilliant. I am this proud owner of one of these super-cool machines, and it's good to see that you have realized its potential and are taking an interest in it. Your magazine has the best coverage of Amiga software. Thanks, and let's have even more of it in this awesome mag of yours.

Now, let's get on to some more more serious things. First of all, I'd like to say that all those who feel offended by that the "Game Over", "Barbarian" or similar adverts are completely immature, and if the human race consisted only of people like them, humanity would have ceased to exist long ago because of its incapability to reproduce.

Secondly, I'd like to say that I , and many others, agree with George Green, who, in his letter in the September issue, complained about the absence of coin-op conversions for the Amiga. Come on, all you software companies out there! Where are you? There is money to be made here with a good conversion.

Finally, on page 9 of the September issue I read a most interesting article saying you are in posession of a really amazing digitised version of Run-DMC's "Walk this Way" for the Amiga. So, I'm now getting down on my knees and asking: Would it be possible, as a faithful reader of CU, to get a copy of this amazing piece of software from you if I sent you a blank disk and money for any expenses? (Please, please, please?)

If not, could you please inform me where an ordinary mortal like me could obtain such sophisticated software? Are these demos protected by copyright?

Thanks again for a wicked magazine, and maybe I'll CU at the PCW.

Jens Meyer
Pinner, Middx.

Sorry, we can't run off disks left right and centre otherwise we'd never get round to producing the mag. Nor is it readily available — maybe the hacking circuit could help you. As for copyright — it probably does infringe the law, but how can a bunch of stealing rappers object?

Sink me, sir Toby!

I am writing to let you know how I feel about a certain software company's latest release. I have been a C64 owner for 4 years but recently changed to an Amiga 500.

However I still read CU for the Amiga reviews and to keep an eye on the 64 scene. It is the Elite game of *Battleships* that has me fuming. We all know of recent cash-ins by many sotware houses on big name arcade game licences, etc, their quality and effect but in my eyes this really is the last straw.

Bringing a game out for £10 that can be played using pencil and paper, I though computers took us a way from ancient games, but not in the eyes of Elite. What next guys, Hangman, noughts and crosses?

I bet Steve Wilcox is laughing all the way to the bank! He has just pulled off the biggest con since the sting. Anyway congratulations on a splendid magazine.

Jan Abeysekera
Shirley, Croydon.

Wait a min you can play chess on a board but no-one complains about a computerised version. You can get a toy version of the game (through M&B) which costs about £30. *Battleships* on your computer for a tenner sounds good to us. Pity Elite didn't think so, they've dumped it (see Hotshots).

Smiths risk

Recently I bought *Barbarian* and *Army Moves* for my 64, but later found *Barbarian* to be faulty so I returned to W.H. Smith, gave them it back and got a refund. Additionally had to give them my receipt on which 'Army Moves' was also included but they refused to give me a replacement receipt for that game so now I am praying that *Army Moves* doesn't go wrong since I have no proof of purchase?

Therefore may I advise readers to ask for a separate receipt for each program when buying more than one game etc, at a time in case one goes wrong.

Jose Thomas
Whitley Bay.

Come on Smiths get your act together.

Dr Pepper

How could you vote Dr Pepper as the worst Fizzy Drink? I think it's really amazing and it tastes nothing like ten-day old Coke. Readers should write in and vote for *their* favourite drink.

I for one would vote for Dr Pepper. Anyway, I'm off to buy some more of the stuff, so I'll be seein' ya!

Matthew Sears
Worcester.

Bluuurrrgghh!

Letters Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Letters

On your marks

I have been getting your magazine for two years now and I really look forward to seeing it each month. One thing about it however really niggles me. Its your marking system for games — it seems wildly inconsistent. Last month's issue provided a classic example. You gave the game *Pirates* a nine out of ten over all and yet it didn't get a Screen Star and yet *Druid II*, *Battle ships*, and *Karate Kid II* all got Screen Stars when they had only achieved an overall mark of 8.

Its not just the allocation of Screen Stars that seems odd as when you look at how games scored in various categories it quite often doesn't get anywhere near the overall mark that is allocated.

Surely it would be much better if CU adopted the percentage marks scheme used by ZZapp 64?

Apart from that gripe I do think CU reviews are excellent. Your reviews are by far the most honest and hard hitting. Don't ever start to pull punches like (*Oh no you don't. We've had enough slagging of other magazines in this column this year-Ed*)

Archie Smart
Newcastle.

Screen Stars are awarded when a reviewer feels that a game is a little bit special. It can be for lots of different reason and is not intended simply to represent an aggregate score in a number of categories.

As to your suggestion for per centages. No way, Archie. They are unneccesarily complicated. Marks out ten is universally accepted as a standard marking system and gives you a much clearer view of exactly where we stand on a game, than giving it 62.578%

Flippin great!

Well done CU for reminding us that there's more to arcades than coin-ops and fruit machines. I'm a certified pinball freak and have been for years. Don't get me wrong I have a 64 and I play the coin-ops, but there's something that bit more physical about pinball. I mean you can't bump the Ferrari back on course in *Out Run* can you?

Let's have some reviews of machines now you're remembered their existence. Not only is there the wonderfully disgusting *Party Animal* out there, but also *Fire* and the groovey *Spring Break*, the perfect accompaniment to *California Games*.

Dave Gittings
Sutton Coalfield.

Glad to know you're out there. More planned for flipper freaks in the near future.

Not a Jeffrey!

I read with dismay in Buzz that there is going to be a Jeffrey Archer adventure. I am bored sick with Jeffrey Archer, his dreadful books and politics generally. I don't see what they have to do with games.

If there is anyone else out there who feels as I do then let's get together and form a keep boring old politicians out of computer games pressure group.

John Peters
Dudley, West Midlands.

We agree John but the K.B.P.C.G is hardly a snappy title for a campaign.

Fizzled out

My mates and I think you were a bit hard on Cherry Pepsi in your last issue.

It had no place at all in the Top Ten Worst Fizzy drinks — especially when you didn't even mention truly disgusting things like 1 Cal Orange, Asda own label Cola and worst of all that muck that seems to have helped Daley Thompson to achieve absolutely zilcho in Italy — yes-you guessed it, Lucozade.

Anyway Fizzy drinks are a pretty stupid thing to run a Top Ten Worst list on in our opinion. So here is our list of Top Ten Worst People on TV: 1 Jimmy Hill, 2 Aneeka Rice, 3 Gaz Top, 4 TV AM's new weather girl (We can't remember her name), 5 Giles Brandreth, 6 Tracy Corkhill, 7 Jim Bowen, 8 Gloria Honeyford, 9 Anybody in Sons and Daughters, 10 Colin from East Enders.

Thanks for a great mag — CU makes all the rest look flat.

Ian and Jake Cronin, John Bell
Glasgow, Scotland.

Thanks for the kind words gents but we still think Cherry coke tastes like Hippo pee.

CU Overview

I have used so much brainpower thinking of what I shall put in this letter my brain is now as hot as the earth's inside. Haven't got any ideas yet though, so this is just taken right out of the blue sky. Maybe if I looked in the letters page I'd see something to write about. Hmm . . . No, nothing to write about there. Just congratulate Gordon Houghton of Blackburn for a really interesting letter. Perhaps if I leaf through the mag. Let's try the arcades pages . . .

Here it is, a three page article about pinball machines. Good that you write something about them to and not only write about video games. I'm sure there are many people around that like to learn a little about the machines that they are playing.

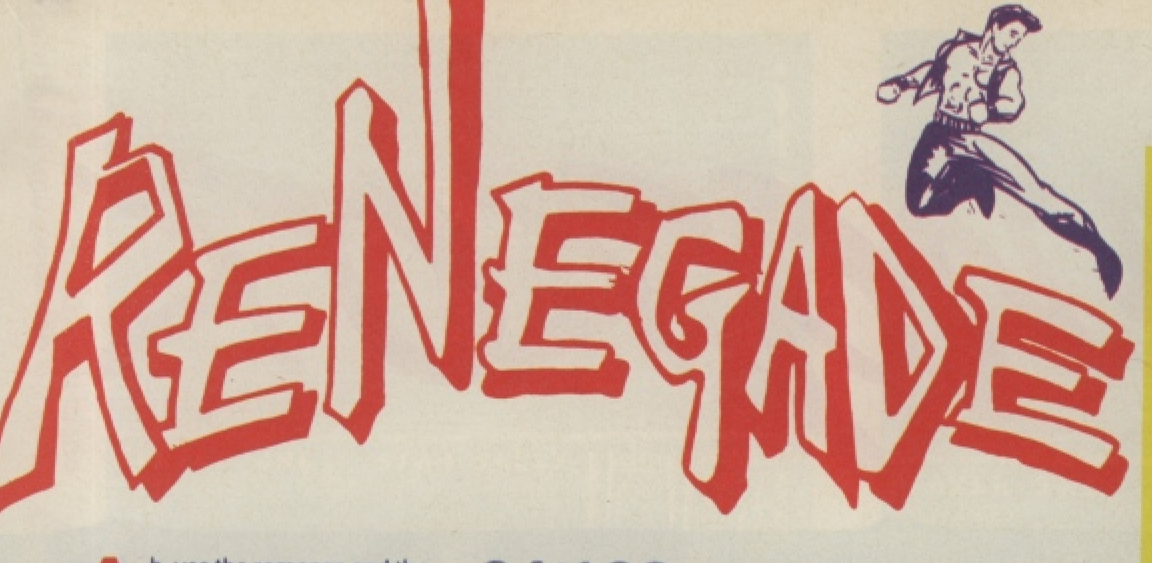
Charts and Buzz are essential for a goodd computer mag. In buzz you can see what's going on in the computer business and also get some ideas of the games that'll come in the future. The charts page is a good place too look if you want to know if a game is good. If it is at the top it must be good. You can also find out if people are stupid. Tommy's Tips must be there, but why can't he get more pages. I can't count all the times when he has stopped me from throwing the 64 out of the window in sheer desparation about the bad excuse for a basic compiler that CBM has put in the 64.

And now the best thing in the whole mag. At the end of my letter just as it is in the mag Hot Shots ! ! ! ! Never has there been a better page in any computer mag. Keep up the good work Mike 'the shot.

Frank Ramboel
Tobol
Norway

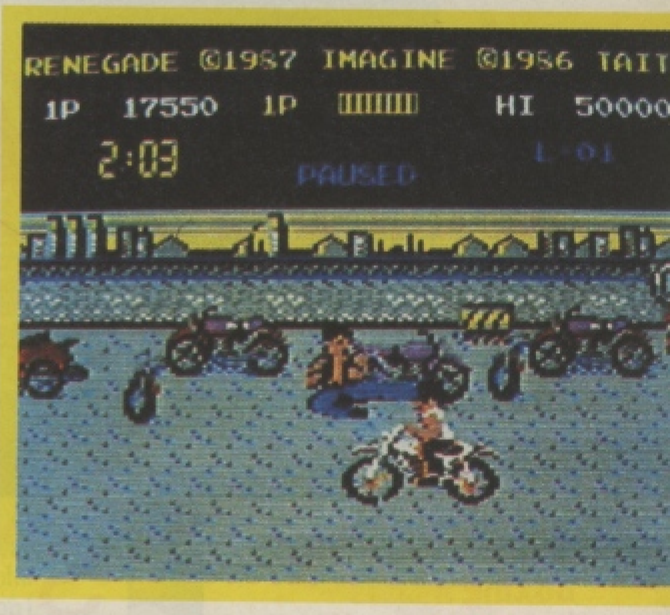
Glad you like us. More Tommy is promised for our big Christmas issues. Hotshots gets quite enough don't you think? *(Yes! Publisher)*

Letters Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.



Renegade

64/128
Ocean
Price: £8.95 cass
£14.95 disk

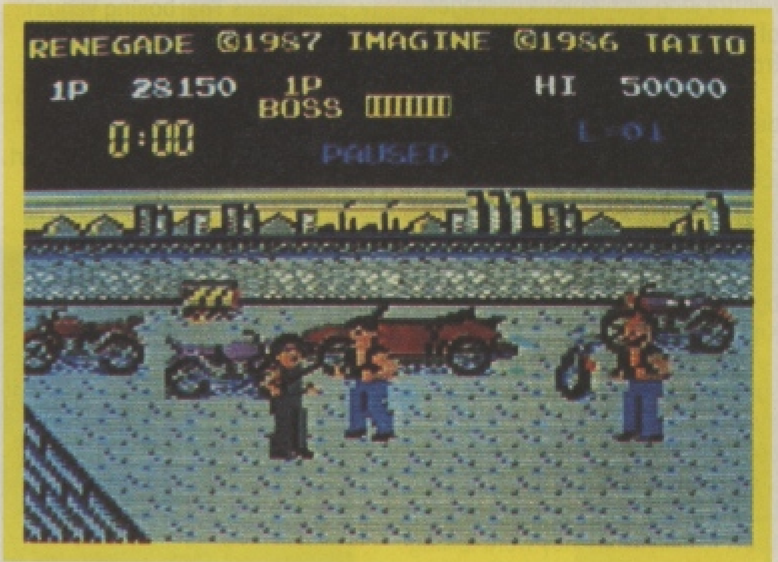


A boot to the biker's head.

Ah, yes the romance and the fun of urban violence. Oh, I remember it well. Walking through a subway in Gants Hill through a pool of blood, being surrounded by flick knife wielding yobs, being chased by skinheads. What a laugh.

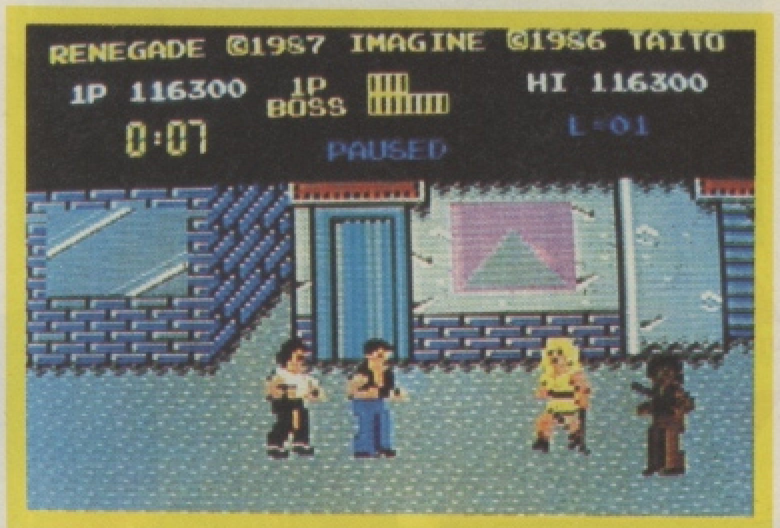
So how come a game about being set upon by gangs of chain weilding, knife throwing thugs is so funny and entertaining? Maybe I'm sick — you should hear my ferry disaster jokes some time. *Renegade* is my favourite arcade beat 'em up, or was until someone with an even sicker sense of humour programmed that king of the goolie crunchers *Double Dragon*.

When I saw *Renegade* in August it was impossible to tell just what it was going to be like. The hastily mocked up screen shots didn't promise much, and now to tell you the truth, whilst improved they don't do the coin-op justice. Thankfully the gameplay does.



Taking on the boss on level two.







Big Bertha prepares to dish it out.

Let's go back to the beginning and remind ourselves just why everyone wants to beat the hell out of us. Well you've rather foolishly agreed to meet your girlfriend in a dodgy area. Maybe she doesn't love you after all. Getting the tube train you're immediately assailed by a gang of grebo-like thugs all intent on kicking your bodily organs about. There's only one thing for it — fight. The option to run which appears infinitely more appealing is not there.

Good job you went to all those karate classes. If the only thing you'd ever fought before was a cold you'd be in well and truly in it. Goodbye honey, hello hospital food.

There's five energy sapping levels of scum stomping before you get to meet your sensible girlfriend. Clear each group of punks and you'll have to face the gang leader to continue. Just look at what you can expect.

Level 1: *The subway*, gangs of punks and blokes with crowbars. The boss isn't such a toughie though.
Level 2: *The waterfront*, rancid bikers try and mow you down and when you've dealt with them there's more punks and a bald boss with a pony tail.
Level 3: *Downtown*, yikes you're assailed by wicked women and huge fat cow. Can you hit a girl? You'd better start.
Level 4: *Shopping precinct*, and the razors are out. One slice and it's blood transfusions for you.
Level 5: *The interior*, where the big boss waits to blow you away.

Ocean have got it all in there and in one clean load too. Whilst the graphics and animation aren't brilliant, they're not by any means bad.

Renegade does play extremely well though and you'll be struggling and cursing with this for hours. mind you that's not just because it's addictive — it is, but it's also very hard. Harder than the coin-op in fact. I'm still struggling to get past Big Bertha, something I can easily accomplish on the real thing. Still you want it to last don't you?

As a slice of urban violence *Renegade* fits the bill nicely. It could have been better I feel, I would particularly like to have a few more effects even if they couldn't manage the speech. As conversions go this still takes some beating — literally and metaphorically.

Mike Pattenden

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8 Overall

BANGKOK

Muay Thai or Thai boxing as it is known in the West is an ancient martial art dating back to the reign of King Naresuan — circa 1560. This early king of Thailand was captured by the Burmese — in one of the many wars between Thailand and Burma. On his release he became a national hero. Great interest in unarmed combat became the hobby of the nation. Muay Thai is now the national sport of Thailand and is also popular in Japan and throughout the far east.





System 3 are emerging as the Infocom of beat 'em ups. No, I don't mean their games feature long and tedious passages of text describing the gore that flows from wounds.

What I do mean is they are developing a specialism in this type of game. It started with *International Karate*, continued with the *Last Ninja*, and the soon to be released *International Karate II*. Now comes the king of all martial arts – Thai boxing in the shape of Bangkok Knights.

They are obviously feeling confident about this. So confident that they splashed out on sending a delegation of journalists to Bangkok (including yours truly) to see Thai boxing at first hand so they would know exactly what they were talking about when writing the review. Now that's what I call a press conference.

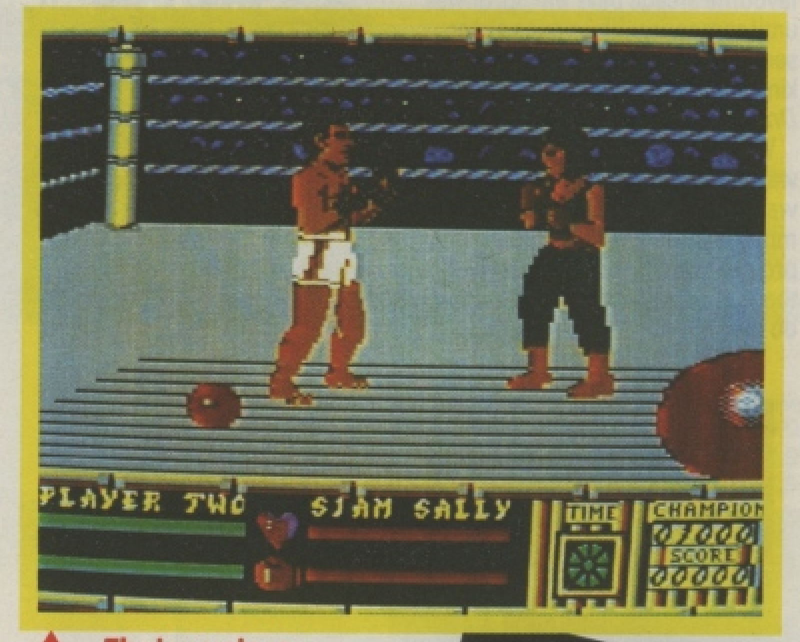
But if you think that this was just an excuse for a bunch of Eds to whoop it up in Bangkok you would be dead right. One other useful function was to enable our hosts – Messrs Mark Cale and Tim Best of System 3 to study the sport so that they could make recommendations on how the game could be improved – having seen the real thing.

"One move we decided to add was the knee kicks and kicks to the head when the player was down. We hadn't realised how vicious the sport was… and the game has been toughened as a result of seeing the real thing at Rajadamnern stadium" (v. prestigious Thai boxing venue).

"We have also taken out some things that were in the game. We had a sort of low stooping punch to the midriff. That's coming out as you don't see that move in the sport. There are surprisingly few blows used by Thai boxers."

These touches of realism apart *Bangkok Knights* does not aim at producing an authentic simulation of the martial art.

You have to defeat eight opponents in order to become the Knight of Bangkok. The back drops are impressive in true System 3 style. The first is a cliff ledge above



▲ **Thai warriors square up to each other.**

▼ **Choose your opponent.**



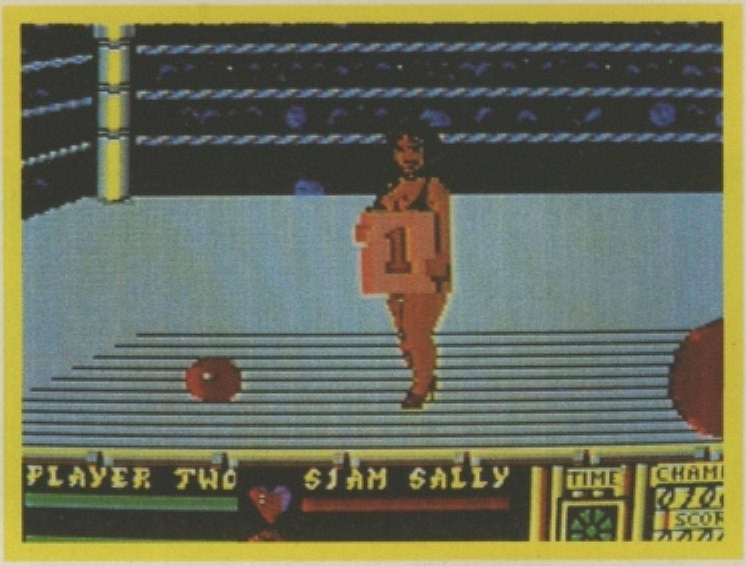


your village, followed by the jungle and then the market square. If you are successful in these bouts you will be granted the right to compete at Bangkok's prestigious Limpani stadium. This is to Thai boxing what Wembley stadium is to soccer fans.

The game will feature the now

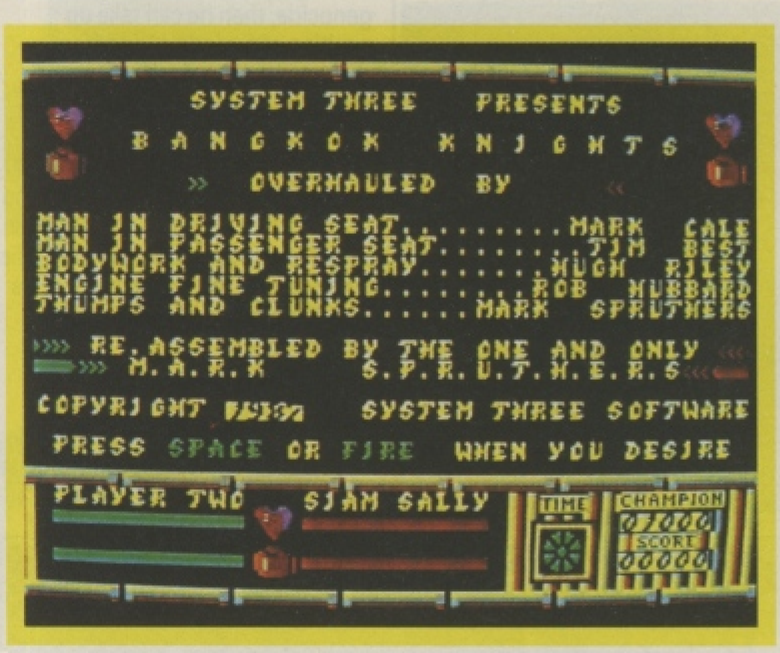


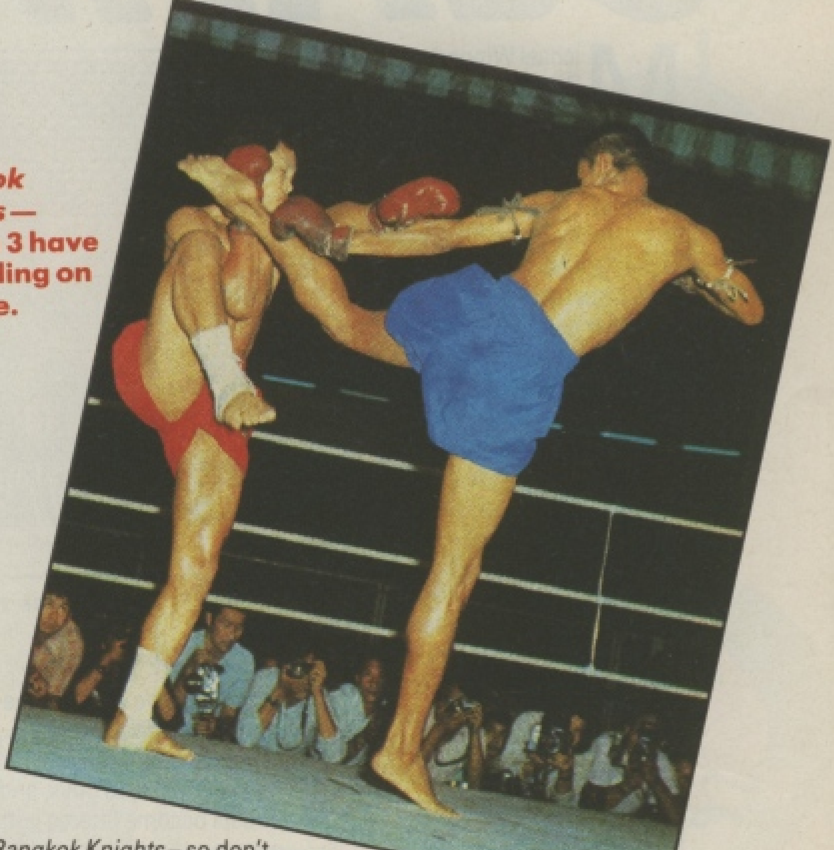
Note the opponent moving in and out of the screen.



Siam Sally holds up the round number card.

KNIGHTS





***Bangkok Knights*— System 3 have a lot riding on this one.**

standard beat 'em up options – against the computer or against a friend. Other information on screen will include a heart barometer to record your strength, score board, and time clock. The champion's score stays on.

The first thing you notice when the game loads is the size of the characters – and the detail this affords. The boxers are three inches tall – and look most impressive as they square up to each other. No less than six sprites are used in each character – to give them size and a smooth scrolling in eight directions. This means that the characters are not just two dimensionally squaring up – as in *International Karate* or *Barbarian*. They can move in eight directions – in and out of the screen as well as left and right.

This should add to the playability of the game – but will undoubtedly require more skill from the player. It is also rather a lot for the 64 to cope with so *Bangkok Knights* will almost certainly be a multi-loader.

Lots of frills have been like a sexy Thai girl who wiggles onto the stage to hold up a round number card. Most authentically I might add (*Sexist! Dep Ed*)

System 3 are also promising excellent sound and music though. I have to say they weren't that spectacular on the early preview disk I saw.

Whether Bangkok Knights is a hit or not will depend on how well the programmers can make the boxers respond to the joystick – no easy task when you are dealing with such large characters. But this is the golden rule for all beam 'em ups and *Bangkok Knights* will be no exception. The good ones enable you to implement the moves quickly and efficiently – the poorer ones do not and lose game play as a consequence.

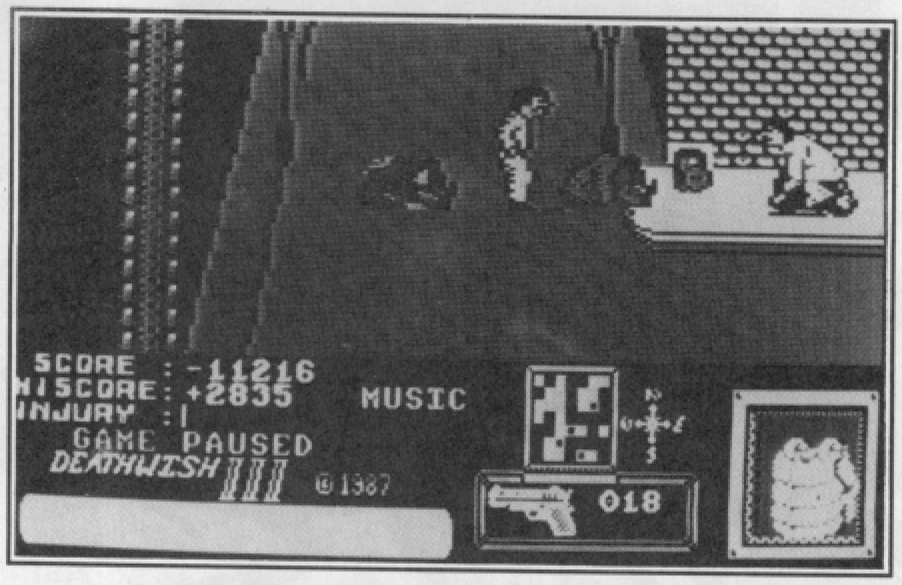
The screen shots you see in this preview are not completely finished. There is a fair bit of work still to be done on *Bangkok Knights* – so don't expect to see it in the shops until late October at least.

At this stage all I can safely say about the game is that it looks interesting. There are plenty of good ideas – the challenge now facing System 3 is to make them all work.

(*What about the Bangkok sex dens you were going to tell us about? Dep Ed*)

Eugene Lacey

PREVIEW



◀ The infirmary men drag off the corpses.

64/128
Gremlin Graphics
Price: £9.99/cass
Price: £14.99/disk

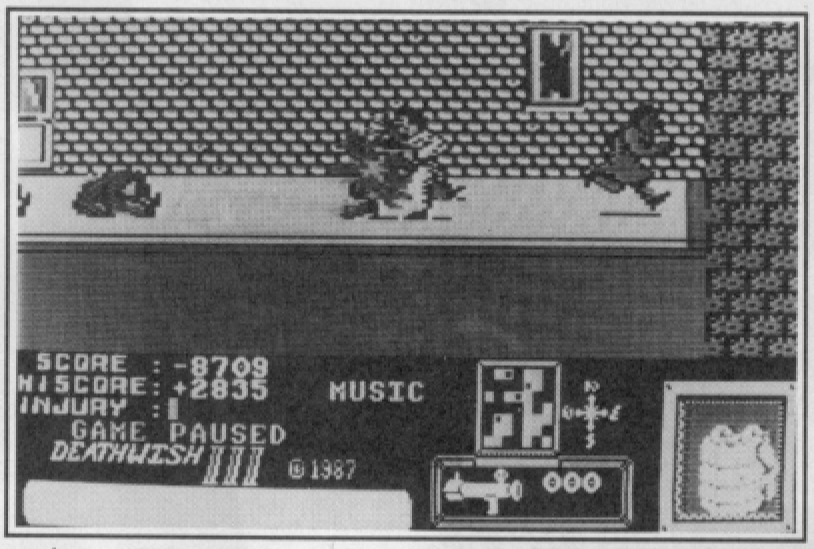
DEATHWISH III

Michael Winner's Deathwish films are amongst the most objectionable movies ever made – stupid, plotless and morally repugnant, they have as much to do with justice and righteous revenge as the Nazi party.

It's just as well, then, that computer games are totally unsuited to the graphic depiction of extreme violence, and though the Gremlin gang have done their best, all we get is some pixellated strawberry jam every time Bronson whips out his rocket launcher. That doesn't raise *Deathwish III* very much in my estimation, but it does make it thankfully less explicit.

Plot is negligible. Vigilante Paul Kersey ('acted' in the films by stone-faced slug Charles Bronson) takes on the 'scum and filth' which abounds on the streets of New York. That doesn't mean, unfortunately, that he strides around manfully with his trusty pooper-scooper scraping up dog turds. Instead he dons a bullet-proof vest, loads up his pump-action shotgun, machine pistol and rocket launcher to 'turn the tables on the punks and creeps who certainly know how to dish out the violence but may not be so good at being on the receiving end'.

The streets that Kersey patrols are featureless and brick-walled, with only the occasional stunted fire hydrant to suggest that this is the Big Apple. Along the sidewalks stroll grannies, burglars, and armed cops and hoodlums. There are also some women of presumably easy virtue, judging by the way that they keep on adjusting their panti-hose.



▲ Splat! Eat rocket-powered death punk!

Kersey gets a positive score for killing off the bad guys, and as the streets become littered with corpses, the white-coated medics haul them off to the infirmary. The medics, like the prostitutes, are immune to Kersey's persuasive social skills, but if the grannies and cops get in the way of the odd stray rocket, then points are subtracted. The more blood-thirsty amongst us can therefore go all out for the big minus score by shooting only innocent bystanders.

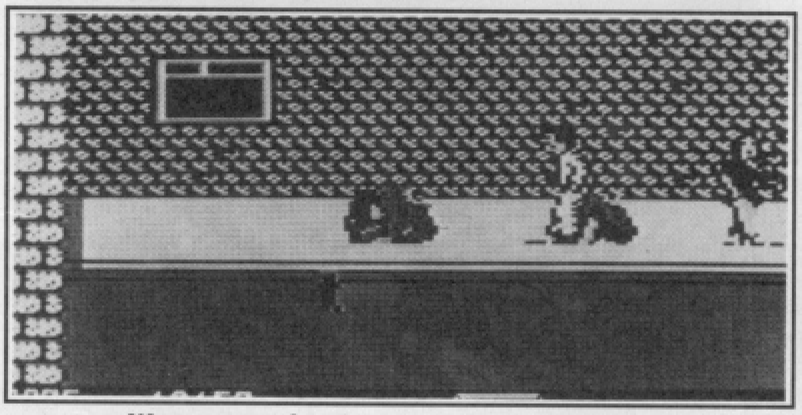
Finding your way around New York is a nightmare, with Kersey's point of view shifting at every tug of the joystick. A scrolling map display only makes things more confusing, as it too changes direction whenever Kersey does. After two hours of monotonous play I still hadn't got the hang of it.

The map also displays the whereabouts of extra weaponry and gang leaders, located inside the buildings. Entering a door will take Kersey into an apartment, furnished with tables and TVs which collapse into rubble when the shooting starts.

The buildings are populated, inexplicably, with the same endless procession of pensioners and street walkers, and however many 'punks and creeps' get killed, there are always more on the way. If Kersey gets bored with close combat genocide, then he can take up position at a window, and from there pick off the passers-by at random, using a roving gunsight.

The whole game is utterly pointless, with no end in sight, just more and more people to maim and destroy. And though Kersey can run out of ammo, and will eventually die if he sustains too many injuries, his bullet-proof armour makes it a lengthy job.

Like the game, the music is repetitive and irritating. If you opt for sound effects, you're rewarded with grunts, shots, thuds and a noise like an electric blender whenever a crook gets liquidised by the rocket launcher.



▲ Woman of dubious virtue hitches up her skirt.

For all its gratuitous violence, *Deathwish III* isn't going to corrupt anyone, but merely bore them rigid. In every possible sense, it's a bloody mess.

Bill Scolding

	Scale 1–10 (bar reaches)
Graphics	7
Sound	5
Toughness	3
Endurance	3
Value	3

4 Overall



From Taito, the masters of arcade entertainment 'BUBBLE BOBBLE'

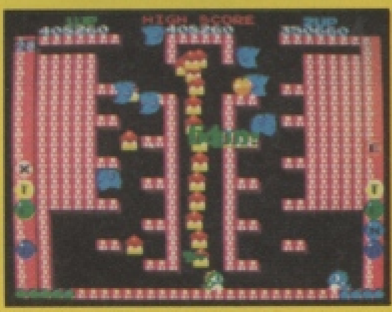


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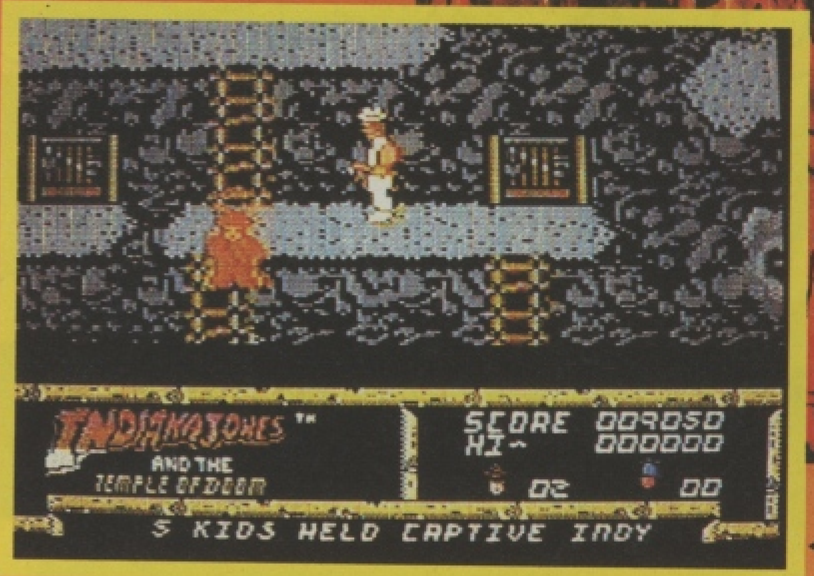
Firebird Software, First Floor, 64-76 New Oxford St., London WC1A 1PS.





Indiana Jones swings into action on your Commodore 64 in the next few weeks. The Ed away-dayed to deepest Birmingham to see how the conversion of this coin-op game was shaping up.

Indy flicks his whip and makes a Thugee see stars.



Two children look on as Indy fights to rescue them.

INDIANA JONES AND THE

Atari muist feel jinxed when it comes to blockbuster films and video games.

First of all ET bombed out as a plug-in game for the VCS. Next down the pan was *Raiders of the Lost Ark* – for which the company was reputed to have forked out millions of dollars in the good old boom days of 1983.

Strange then that the company's coin-op division (Now totally separate to the ST manufacturer) should have yet another crack at the elusive prize of producing a successful Indy game.

On the face of it they had everything on their side. A free hand from Lucal films to filch all the exciting bits from *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, arcade machine quality graphics, and a hot reputation following the success of games like *Gauntlet* and *Paperboy*.

But if the performance of the game in London's chain of Family Leisure Centres is anything to go by, a successful Indy game is still proving as elusive as the Lost Ark of the Covenant itself.

There is an important lesson here. Don't make the mistake of thinking that just because a game is a coin-op licence it must be good. There are going to be dozens of these games going on sale in the next few months and they are not all stormers.

So what are US Gold's chances of getting it right when everyone else with Indy video games so far has got it wrong?

Having just seen an "80% finished copy of the 64 version I would say that they are in with a good chance – certainly a much better chance than they ever had with their last Indy game – that absurd collection of Monster-style puzzles from Mindscape.

Sure, they start with the same basic game design as the coin-op. But this is no disadvantage – it is a sound game. Its qualified failure in the arcades has to be put in perspective. Coin-ops trade on instant addictiveness. If they don't measure up in the instant appeal stakes they don't get any more 10ps – end of story.

Home games meet a different set of needs. You are not limited in the time you have to play them by money (apart from the initial outlay) or by time itself – if you wanna play till four in the morning who's to stop you?

This is why simpler games have succeeded in the arcades when the very slightly more cerebral – say even *Ghosts and Goblins* for example – have not done quite so well.

So what will *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* offer 64 owners? There are three separate challenges. The game starts in a grey rocky maze where you have to rescue eight children imprisoned behind cruel iron grids – in little hollows hewn out of the rock face.

This opening screen is basically a levels and ladders affair with a bit of beat 'em up thrown in for good measure. Various nasties are after you as you try to rescue the children.

There are the organge boiler-suit clad 'Thugees' who come at you with a Zombie-like determination.

Indy is armed only with his trusty whip to protect him from the Thugees, poisonous snakes, bats, and fire-ball breathing demons who pop up out of nowhere at random.

The whip can be aimed in four directions – left, right, and up and down. So it's whip crack away to keep those nasties at bay. Such poetry.

The vertical whip-crack is particularly useful when you are climbing up and down the ladders.

Once the sprogs have been rescued it's time to find the mine car and ride the rails to level two. This scene is what made the coin-op famous – and it certainly is the most hectic part of the game. Unfortunately the mine car sequence was not available on our preview copy so I can't tell you anything about how well it works on the 64. As far as the coin-op itself goes, though, this bit is excellent.

You career downhill in the mine-car – cracking your whip at the nasties in pursuit and the oil cans that are dotted around the side of the tracks.

You can also tilt the car on the





▼ Inside the Temple of Doom.

rails – rather like BR's new APT train. You know, the one that doesn't work properly.

The mine shaft sequence is probably the most popular part of the coin-op so our final review will be looking closely at how well the conversion of this particular piece of game-play has been implemented.

E TEMPLE OF DOOM

The third level is frankly a bit of an anti-climax after the high jinks in the mine car. You are now in the Temple of Doom itself, where the Thugees have hidden the magical Stones of Raa. You will have to defeat more nasties and get across a moat of molten lava to get anywhere near the stones.

Using your trusty whip you lash out and rap it around a pole to swing across the lake to reach the jewels – but you have to watch for the Thugees waiting for you on the other side.

There are three increasing levels of difficulty – which US Gold believe will make for a tough challenge. The game certainly needs to be toughened up beyond the easy peasiness of this early version.

In the meantime turn over for your chance to win every new US Gold game for the next twelve months – with *720°* and *Out Run* included amongst the dozens of new USG games for '88. That's a compo not to miss.





◀ Entrance to the mine shaft.



Keep up with the JONESES

CU COMPETITION

Indiana Jones in the 'Temple of Doom' provided the inspiration for Atari / US Gold's latest coin-op conversion for the Commodore 64.

Judging from our exclusive preview on the previous page it looks certain to drag a multitude of Indy fans out of the woodwork.

The prize we have to offer in our super Indy compo is in keeping with the big budget reputation of Lucas films and the big name producers who have been associated with the adventure films in the past.

We are offering you the chance to win a free copy of every US Gold game to be launched in the next twelve months.

Imagine it — you have read already in CU about forthcomng titles like *Out Run, 720°, Infiltrator II,* and *Gauntlet II* — add these to the tens of games not yet announced by USG for '88 and it all adds up to one hell of a prize.

Runners up have not been forgotten either with twenty copies of *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom.* Prize wise this compo is guaranteed to keep you up with the Joneses.

All you have to do to get your hands on one of Indy's prizes is answer these simple questions about the famous films.

Question 1 Which chocolate company based their TV advertisements on the rolling ball scene from Raiders of the Lost Ark?
Question 2 Which actor plays the part of Indiana Jones?
Question 3 Indiana Jones in the Temple of Doom was directed by (a) Mike Pattenden, (b) Steven Spielberg or (c) Stanley Kubrick?
Now tell us what you think a third Indiana Jones film should be titled.

Entries should be addressed to Indy Compo, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.
Entries should reach us no later than 26th October.

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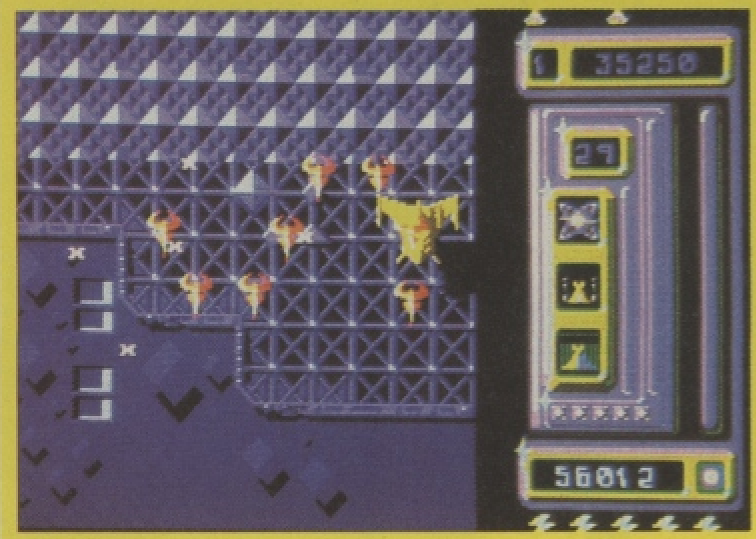
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Goldrunner

It really doesn't matter if a game looks and sounds incredible if it plays appallingly. It is rather like going to see a film with beautiful scenery and amazing effects, but an awful storyline (Jaws III, Superman IV, The Living Daylights!!!).

It is good to see, therefore, that Microdeal, the Cornish Software house, have released a game for the Amiga which, although good to look at, is also very playable. *Goldrunner* is the second Amiga game from Microdeal, and as with Karate Kid II, it is a conversion from a well received Atari ST game.



You are Goldrunner. Man's destiny rests in your hands (oh no, not again!!). Earth is slowly but surely dying of poisoning caused by pollution in the atmosphere and therefore the population must be evacuated to a new and less polluted planet. Unfortunately, to get to this new planet you must fly through the Ring Worlds of Triton, an aggressive lot who see your intrusion on their space as nothing short of criminal. So you must kill as many of these tiresome aliens as possible, until they realise who's boss!

As with most games of this ilk, *Goldrunner* uses a split screen, with the right hand third of the screen being used as an indication of how you are doing in the game; score, ships left, shields left, the high score etc. The rest of the screen is left as a vertically scrolling play area.

Your ship is equipped with two laser cannons to start with as well as five units of armour strength. Each time you are hit by an enemy mine, both your armour and craft strength depletes until, just prior to death, your craft has very little extra speed and only one cannon.

As well as your weapons, you also have the ability to use a booster, which sends you zooming away from every conceivable enemy craft, although you also tend to zoom straight into very solid buildings — another major hazard in *Goldrunner*. Dodging enemy mines can be achieved either by zooming away or, for the more dextrous amongst us, by performing some lovely U-turns (simple enough as long as mice are your preferred medium of input).

The speed of the scrolling is absolutely stunning! Even at normal speed it is impressive, but when you hold down the boost button, it has to be seen to be believed.

When flying either up or down the terrain it is easy to see the time and effort that has gone into the design of the land below you; haunting faces, creature-like fossils, towers and mounds, all excellently defined and all made to be blown away as you scorch the landscape. As well as having landscape to shoot, there are also a host of enemies who obligingly fly past, letting you blast them to kingdom come.

Once you have completed one wave of aliens and destroyed a good percentage of the ground installations, you are then presented with a bonus screen *Uridium*-style on which to up your score.

Unfortunately their had to be a let down. The tune is pretty bad, a sort of poor man's version of Star Wars produced on a childs plaything, but even worse is the continual moaning of a sampled voice.

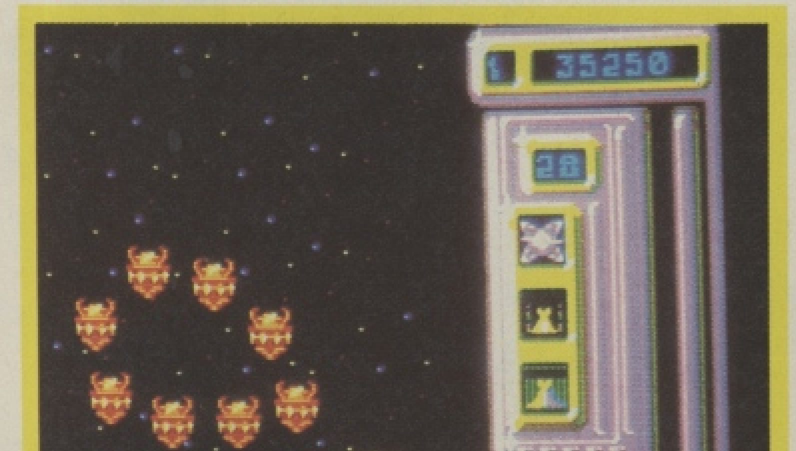
With such comments as "Go for it", and "Don't give up" the voice does little except prove exceptionally annoying. Thankfully Microdeal have included the option of turning the sound off.

Another small criticism is that you cannot play the game with a joystick, you must use the Amiga's mouse.

That apart, *Goldrunner* i an excellent shoot-'em up. In many ways it is reminiscent of a scrolling *Galaga*, but on the Amiga it is considerably better than an average arcade game.

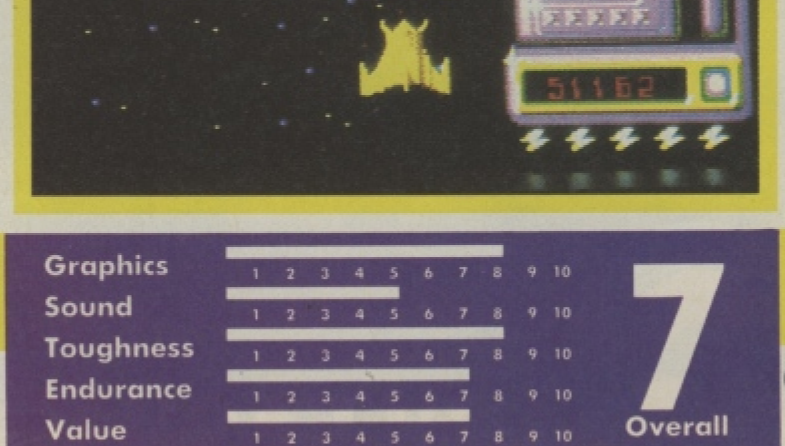
Francis Jago

A welcome second shoot 'em up for the Amiga.



Purple nasties line up attack.

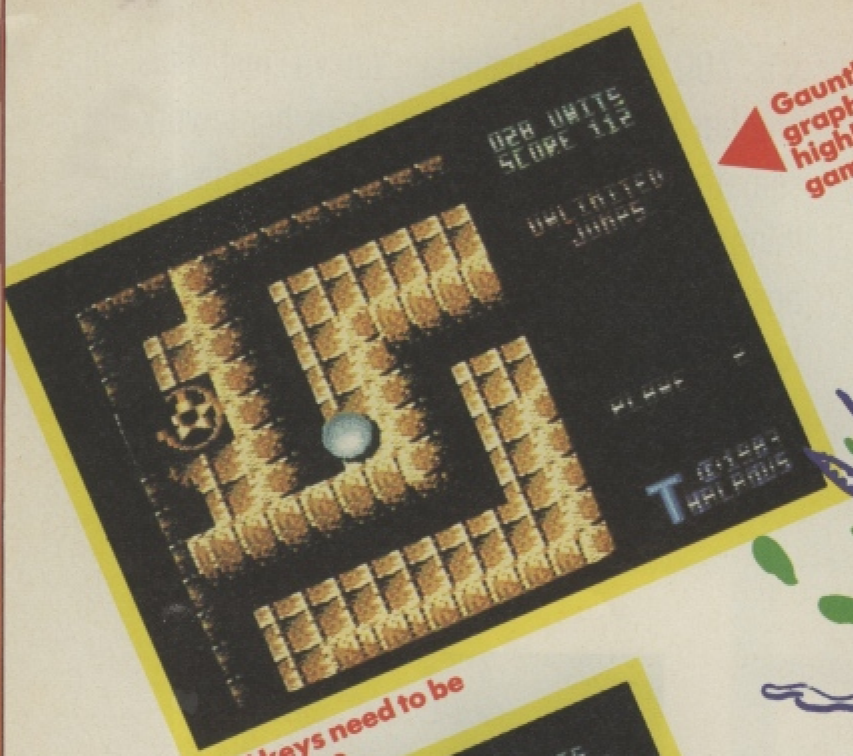






UNLEASH THE POWER OF YOUR





Gauntletesque graphics — but a highly original game.



Teleports and keys need to be mastered on plane 2.

64/128
Price: £9.95/cass £14.95/disk

It will be the worst disaster ever to befall the games business if *Delta* and now *Quedex* programmer – Stavros Fasoulus – makes this his last game.

The word is that he is shortly to be drafted by the Norwegian army for a year and it is not certain if he will resume his game design career afterwards.

Delta proved that he knew how to make the 64 sing now Quedex proves that he also knows what makes a great game. So Stavros – on behalf of 64 gamers everywhere please come back.

Quedex is probably the most original game of the year – though still highly playable arcade fare.

You control a metallic ball – like a pinball bearing – that has to be successfully steered through ten planes – completing various tasks as you go.

Plane 1 is a training level for the following nine levels – teaching you many of the basic control techniques you will need to master the game. It does this by a series of sub planes. Short little bouts against the clock to teach you the ropes.

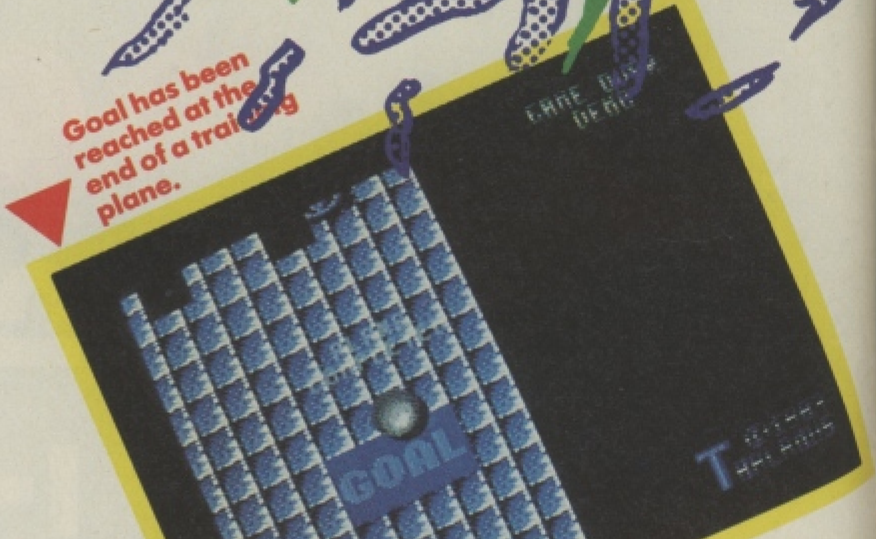
Plane 2 is for real. Pick up the keys to open the doors. Its background graphics and the fact that it has teleports automatically makes you think of *Gauntlet*. But there isn't much of a comparison – other than the visuals. Quedex is much more of a cerebral challenge. Certain invisible keys only appear when you are close to them – so you need to keep your eyes fixed on the screen intently. Your aim is to find the 'Goal' and end the level.

Plane 3 is similar to the above but this time you have to find four hidden amulets – and when I say hidden I mean very well hidden. Phew.

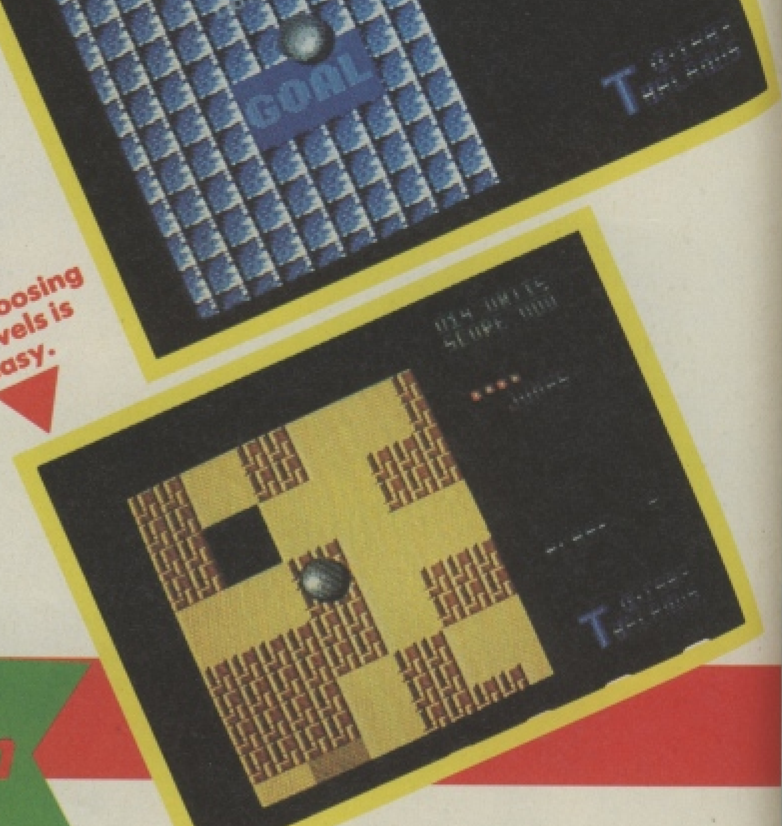
Plane 4 not my favourite this one. You can only move the bearing left and right to avoid obstacles – as the chequered back drop scrolls speedily up screen.

Plane 5. The best of them and I

Goal has been reached at the end of a training plane.

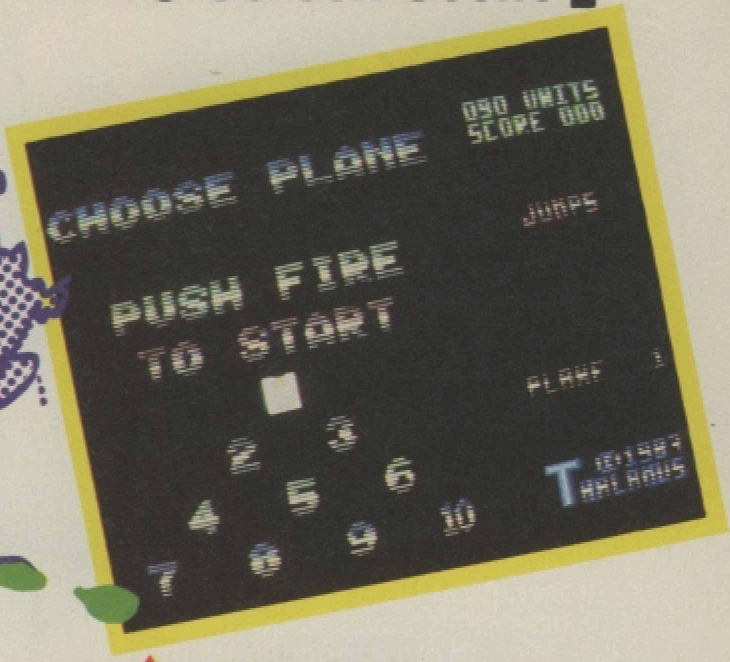


Choosing levels is easy.

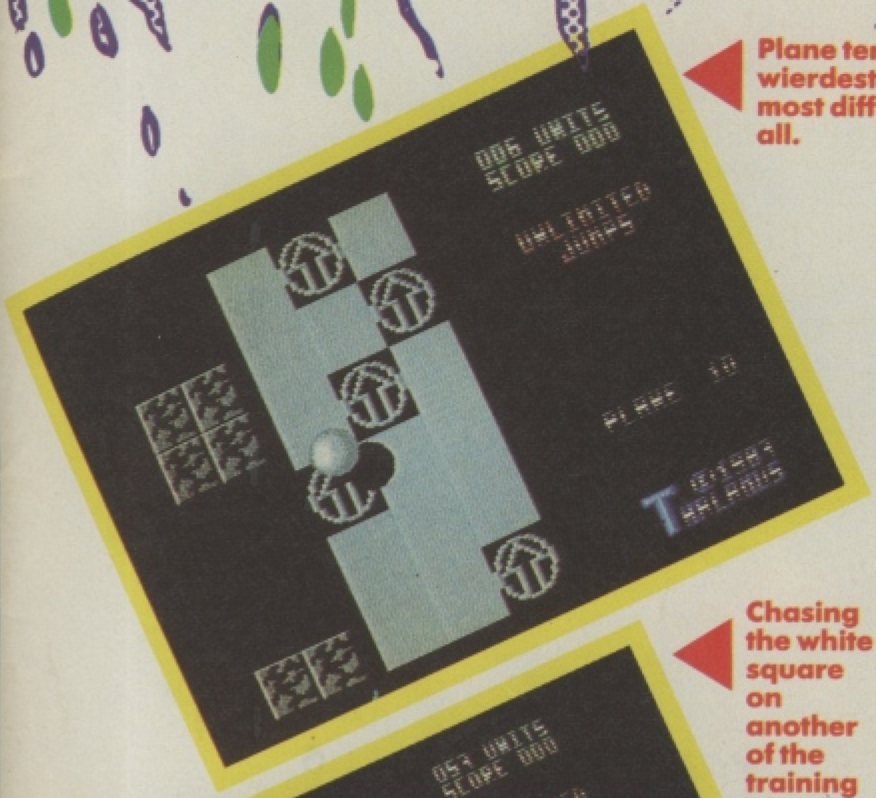


C.U. Screen Star





▲ My favourite level — make it all a pretty tile pattern.



◄ Plane ten — the wierdest and most difficult of all.



◄ Chasing the white square on another of the training planes.

C.U. Screen Star

have to say if this neat little game was launched as a cheapo all by itself I would be raving about it. It's a bit difficult to explain though, so listen carefully. You have to make the whole background area turn into patterned floor tiles. You do this by making contact with them. Easy? No, not quite, because there are also flashing squares that have the effect of toggling whole vertical columns in between on and off, and safe black squares. You can hop from square to square by pressing fire and pushing the joystick in the direction you want to jump. I played this game for hours. The other eight or nine planes are a bonus to me.

Plane 6. The goal is very difficult to find on this strange and difficult level. Question marks are to be collected as you pursue your search for it. Weird things happen on this plane – like being sucked into a pipe and forced through its twisting turning route.

Plane 7. A nasty one – once you enter it you have to complete it – hardly fair.

Plane 8 – is more of a race against time than the other levels. There are four keys to be collected before the ground literally disappears from beneath your feet. Speed is of the essence.

Plane 9 – is the nearest thing to slam dancing I have ever seen on a computer game and my next favourite after number 5. Your objective is to destroy blocks by bumping into them to the accompanying sound of loud crashes and bangs. Extra speed will increase your destructive power.

Plane 10 – people are going to say that this level is like *Bounder, Ball Blazer* and the like but the similarity is purely visual. Again you are trying to reach goal – but by negotiating different heights of obstacles – recognisable from the varying shades of grey. Another tough one.

Each of the planes in *Quedex* is a challenge in its own right and different games players are going to choose different ones as their favourites. The important thing to bear in mind is that they are all connected – in that the master screen totals all your bonuses as you progress through the levels.

Graphics and sound are both superb in *Quedex* – offering a great variety of each and best of all without the use of multi load. All levels are selected quickly and efficiently by three quick clicks of the fire button.

A strange game but a great game. It's going to be 'cult' to play it so if you want to stay crucial, bitchin, and bad I'd seriously start thinking about swapping some cash for this one.

Eugene Lacey

	Rating (1–10)
Graphics	8
Sound	8
Toughness	9
Endurance	9
Value	8
Overall	**9**

PIRANHA

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Piranha



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California Games™ features superb graphics, all the atmosphere of the West Coast, and one to eight players can take part. All the quality you expect from an Epyx product is here and so much more. We could tell you more but instead lets hear what ***ZZAP 64*** had to say:

''California Games is quite simply the apex of computer sports gaming''.

''Even in purely technical terms Epyx have somehow managed to surpass their own high standards — the pictures and sounds generated by this program are atmospheric beyond belief.

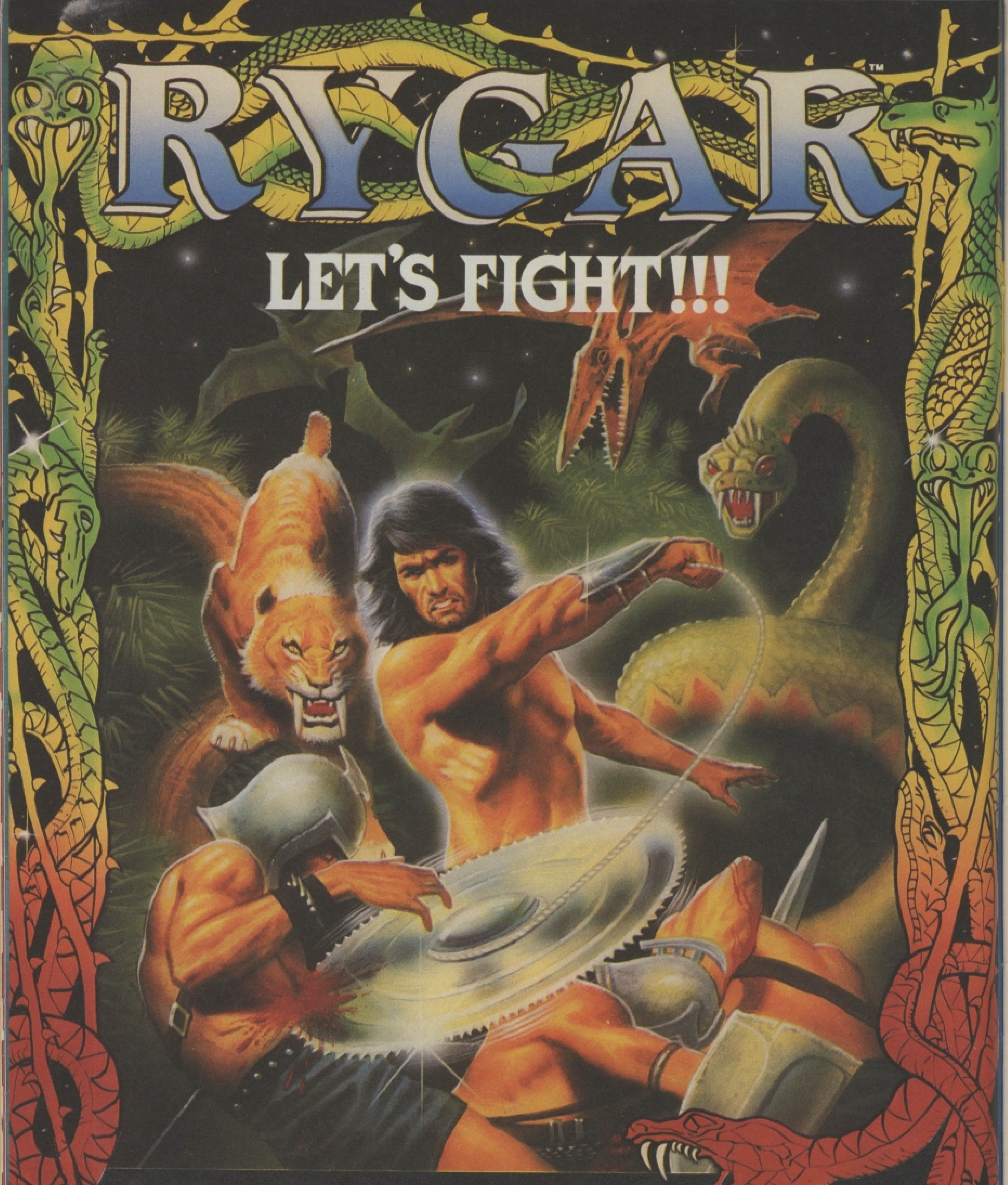
''If you gather up all the superlatives from previous Epyx reviews and add them together, you just might go halfway towards describing California Games''.

There. Need we say more?



ast forever!

U.S. GOLD

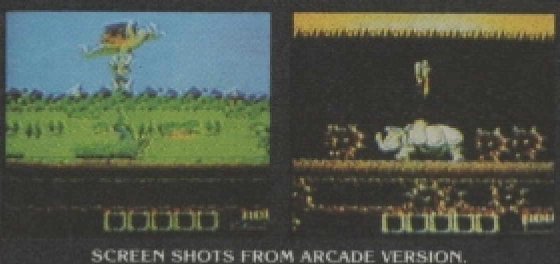


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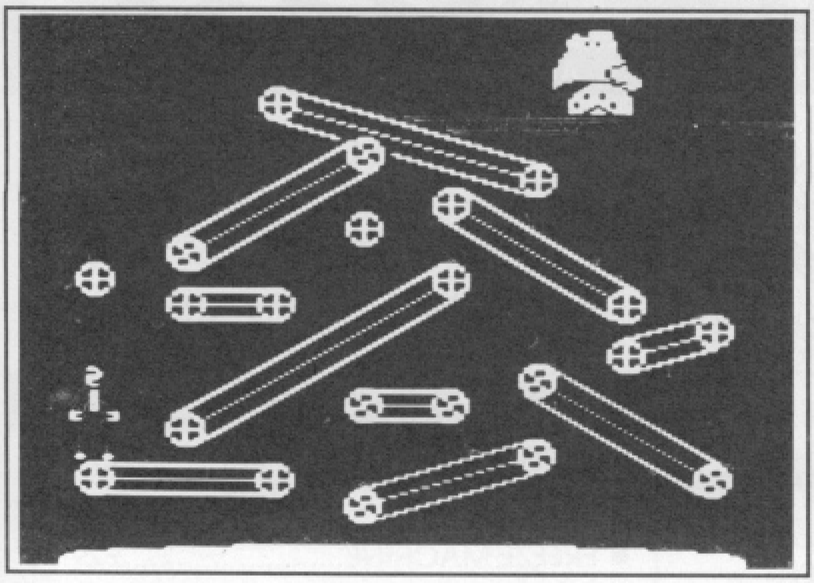
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TECMO™



Arcade sequence on conveyor belts.



When Keene has a choice of lines his speech bubble turns black. Shifting the 'stick runs through the options wich normally include a couple of choices and a smartarse remark. It's tempting to mouth off a lot, but choose the smartarse option too often and you'll get the chop from someone you annoy.

Occasionally you'll be given the opportunity to choose between performing a couple of actions like walking through the front door or climbing in the window. Selecting the wrong one may take the game in a different direction. It may more often be fatal.

Every now and again as you elect an option you will be thrown into an 'arcade sequence' which you'll have to negotiate to continue in the game. There are some eight including 'Bomber', 'Swimmer' and 'Jetpack'. These show a remarkable degree of similarity to old computer games like *Defender* – 'Jetpack' or *Hunchback* – 'Building'. Fail here and you lose more of your four lives. Lose the lot and you're back to the beginning of the story and another cuppa whilst you wait for more disk accessing.

The screen itself holds up to about four frames on average, but each one accesses disk as it progresses, so there's much impatient clicking of the joystick button to try and speed it along. Some of the frames are animated quite nicely, a foot treads in some bubble gum which sticks to the sole for example, but the graphics are nothing special. Certainly not the quality of many comic illustrators or even our own Jerry Parris. Nor is there much attempt to design a page by doing something special with the framing.

Sound is pretty minimal and you only get a handful of tunes that become pretty monotonous after a while. Sadly three disks, and six sides do not live up to their promise that it will really "show you what *getting* into a comic book is all about". The promise of great interaction just isn't fulfilled. Now 'Hotshots – king of slander' there's a good strip!

Mike Pattenden

COMICS

64/128 Accolade Price: £12.95/disk

Comics have undergone a change since Superman first pulled his undies over his tights, and Robin climbed into his pixie boots. They're much much tougher, twice as streetwise and bang up-to-date. Give me a game called *Comics* and I can guarantee you'll grab my attention.

Just imagine the chance of playing an animated Tintin, or swallowing the mouse whole in Tom and Jerry... Well Accolade's Comics doesn't quite do that. You don't even get the chance to write your own script.

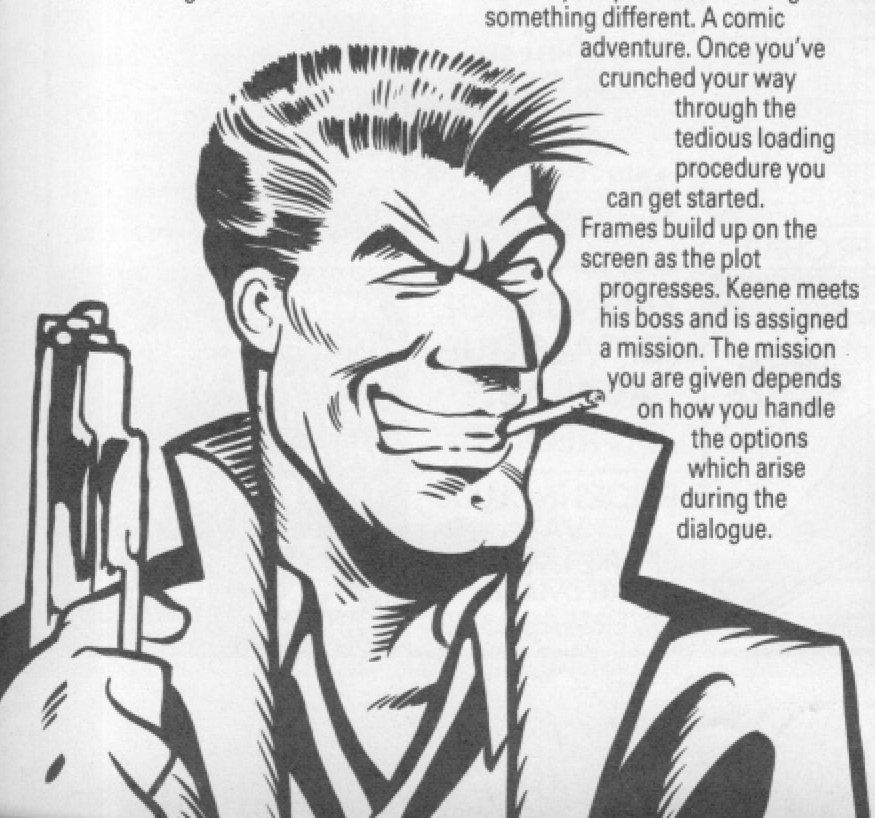
What you do get is the brainchild of (I think) Steve Keene a balding bespectacled and probably very rich American yuppie with a fetish for cheap graphic detective novels. 'Steve Keene – Thrillseeker' is his rough cut, smartmouthed, cool-headed animated alter ego. Basically he's probably all the things his deficient creator isn't.

Steve Keene 'Private Spy' is a comic book with options. Like all these huge American conceptualised packages you get a load of disks to shuffle around and a hole in your pocket. You also get something different. A comic adventure. Once you've crunched your way through the tedious loading procedure you can get started.

Frames build up on the screen as the plot progresses. Keene meets his boss and is assigned a mission. The mission you are given depends on how you handle the options which arise during the dialogue.



Keene electrocutes himself.



Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	n/a 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Overall	5

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Three years ago *Track and Field* was at the top of the arcade gamer's playing list. These days, most people wouldn't give it a go if it was on free play in their local arcade. Why, then, do Konami choose to release it after such a long time? I suppose they can't lose, you release a licence they have lying around in the archives, ask the progrommer to do a half-hearted rush job on the game, and Lee Wong's your uncle!

TRACK AND FIELD

For those of you who weren't big enough to get into arcades until recently, I suppose I better explain a little about this famous athletics game. The game is set out in events. There are six events, the hundred metres, the event that separates the contenders from the no-hopers; the long jump – can you break Bob Beamon's long standing world record? Javelin, show Fatima Whitbread how it's done. 110 metre hurdles, a test of skill, and agility. Why not try your hand at hammer throwing? And round off a great days athletics with the high jump.

To do each event, the main ability you will need is waggling power (*Oo-er! – M.P.*) No. That is, joystick waggling power (*Oooh-err! – N.K.*) This is getting ridiculous,, I'll explain event by event.

100 metre sprint: Back to basics here. Simply waggle your joystick as fast as you can till you hit the tape. The timing here is rather ridiculous — I smashed Ben Johnson's 'unbeatable' record, by over three seconds!

Long Jump: Wiggle the joystick from left to right (again!) until you reach the line and press the fire button and hold it down until you think the jumper is at the perfect angle (around 45°) Thank you, David. Now let's go live over to Crystal Palace for the…

The javelin: a Fatima waggler. ▼



Javelin: Fatima looking composed, waggles her bum, er, joystick from left to right and then approaches the line and presses fire… she's held on too long… No, no she hasn't its 45°, what a throw, it must be at least 90 metres. My, my she's a natural for the long jump. Well, who wouldn't be, the two events are identical.

Hurdle: 'Nippy' Nick Kelly crouches eagerly waiting to begin his race against 'Luckless' Lacey who hasn't won an event so far. This is the biggest mismatch since Gardner versus Bruno. And they're off, athletically built Kelly grins a victory smile as he begins to take the lead. But a much psyched up, serious looking Ed who is waggling at a slower pace than his rival, times his stab at the fire button perfectly and clears the hurdles faultlessly. Kelly at the meantime has clipped one or two with his knee, and… Oh, he's caught that one nastily, and the Ed dips to the tape and leaves a much embarrassed Kelly sprawled across the fifth hurdle. Oh my word!

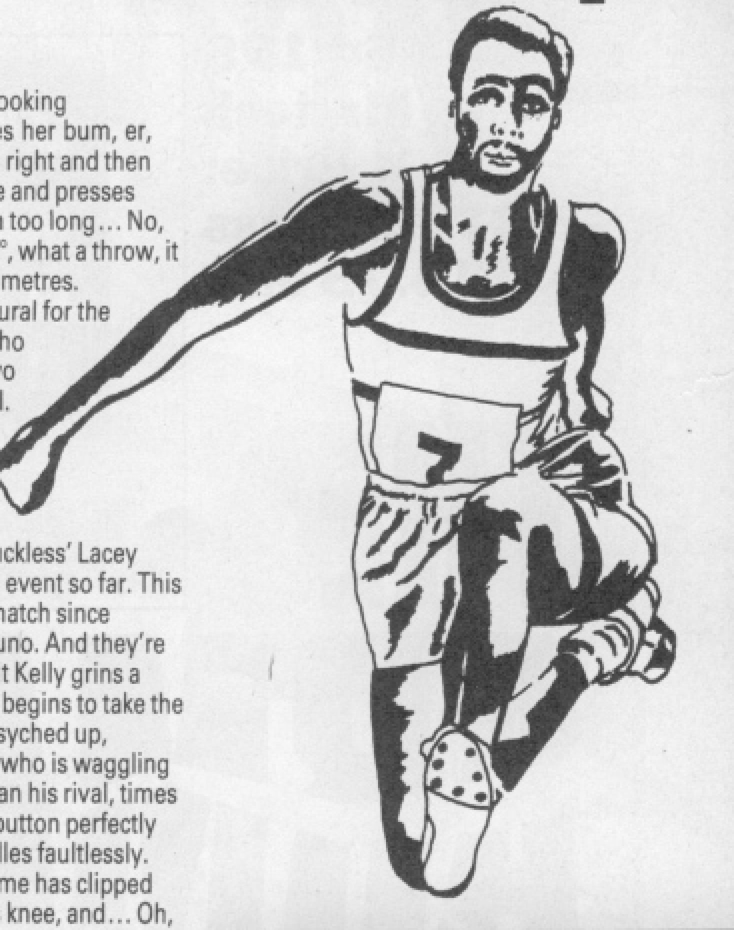
Hammer: At last an event that doesn't require attempting to put your elbow out of joint. Simply start the player turning by a touch of the joystick. Watch him spin around until you feel he has gained enough speed through the centrifugal force and then press fire and release at the correct angle, and watch it soar. This event is O.K. but I really should note that it gave C.U.'s chief joystick basher Linford Pattenden (Mike's cousin) a little trouble, as it relies heavily on timing, rather than speed.

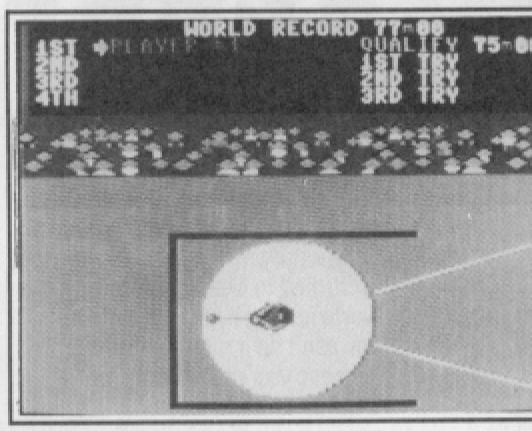
High Jump: Again another event that requires no bashing of the Quickshot. Tap the joystick to watch your player boost thirty metres up to the jump, then again with the fire button you must first judge his lift off angle, and then once more press the button so he descends correctly.

And your verdicts please, gents, over to Said Appatenden "Well, I must say, Dessy. I really feel it got off the blocks a little too slow to make an impact on the athletic sim race."

Let's ask that young South African prospect Miss Eugene Budd "It's not going to git past me in a harry. Quite frankly, it'll faull fauster then Mary Decker."

Unfortunately Daley Kelly was not available for comment as he was busy off the West Coast of America, surfin', skatin', and BMXin', but we spoke to his T-shirt who only said "I wish they all could be Californian…"





▲ **The hammer: pinpoint timing needed.**

So that about sums it up. The score as they say is settled, *Track and Field* came in eighth, but in all fairness, it was injured by bad graphics, obstructed by appalling sound, and the fight should've been stopped in one 'cause the game is older than Chuck Gardner.

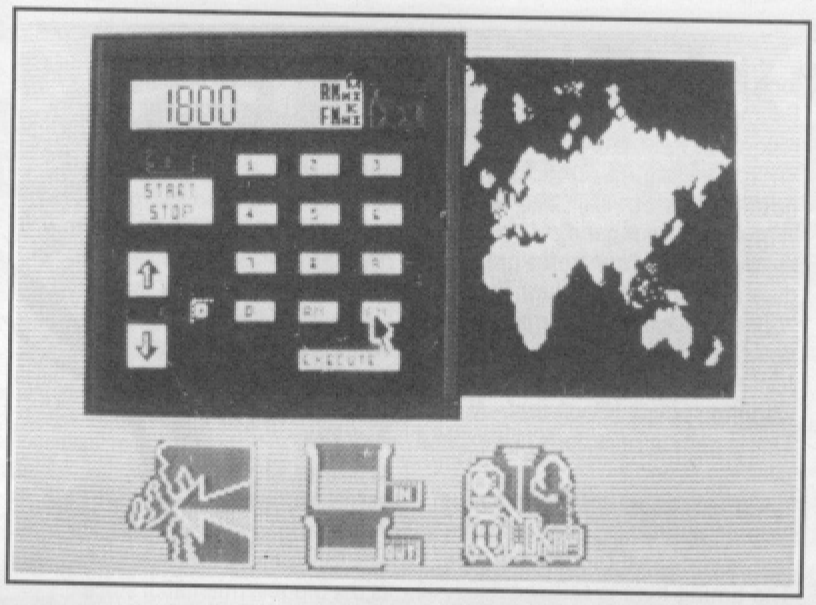
To the serious cola-drinking, chocolate biscuit-eating-gamer, this honestly wouldn't last one cupful and two biccies. I'm sorry Konami, but no point in trying to flog a dead horse.

Ferdy Hamilton

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5
Overall

64/128
Martech
Price:
£12.95/cass
£14.75 disk



THE ARMAGEDDON MAN

Armageddon is a situation in which nobody gets to have a summer holiday. Beaches would be curiously uncrowded and Coke would no longer be It. You job, according to Martech, is to stop the world nuking itself into extinction. If you can't do it nobody else can, because you're the Supreme Commander of a United Nations-type organisation called the UNN. That means your shoulders need extending to carry all the pips.

Martech's high-powered team of economic and strategic analysts have been staying up nights. Using high level data and a Philips School Atlas, they've devised a world of the not too distant future consisting of 16 primary nations including the USA and Russia (known as Eastern Block.)

But they've made some perceptive changes. We now have a United Europe. Arab states have formed the Islamic Alliance. There's a Black African Republic covering most of Africa, and Central American banana republics have formed one huge banana republic called the Central American Alliance. China has also become a more potent force.

This is a strategy game in which you must keep all 16 countries smiling at each other. Instead of telling them non racist jokes, you must actively promote good relations between them and with yourself.

You also realise that countries will be less disposed to pressing fire-buttons if they're economically stable and generally doing very well thank you. A few more weapons might also help smaller states feel less vulnerable. And a few timely warnings might stop angry words turning into transcontinental rubble or a conventional war turning into a holocaust.

Being Supreme Commander gives you sufficient power to achieve all these aims. The real skill lies in making the right decisions when you employ what's at your disposal.

The screen depicts a large world map, with icons to the bottom and left. All information appears in windows and always involves simply choosing an option from a list. The whole thing is joystick driven and very easy to control.

Here's what each of the icons offers you:

Satellites

SATELLITES: you get six laser defence satellites and three reconaissance ones. Simply deploy them where you think fit on the map, ie. potential trouble spots. The reconaissance satellites will give advance warnings of military buildups. The laser defence type, if positioned correctly, will destroy missiles already fired and may consequently stop a war escalating.

Information

INFORMATION: this gives figures on food, missiles and technical resources for each country. Not surprisingly the USA and Eastern Block comes top in all categories. China has become petty hi-tech but the Third World is still well down on food. Such information will be useful whenever countries request food, arms or resources from each other. Figures in red represent a deficiency whilst green shows that all is well. You decide whether or not to allow a request and what the consequences may be.

UNN Force

UNN FORCE: select this icon and then choose which of the 16 countries to send the taskforce to. Remember that countries won't take kindly to having them around for too long, but the Force will make them that bit more disposed to do what you want.

In & out tray

IN AND OUT TRAY: countries are constantly sending you letters and it's wise to read and act on them. You can also send a variety of letters ordering countries to reduce or increase arms, telling countries to behave, reprimanding or supporting, and sending food.

Radio

RADIO: this natty little device lets you tune into countries' broadcasts and maybe glean some valuable information. There are two ways of using it. You can set to scan any one of the six band frequencies and print out messages when it finds them. The trouble here is that they're in code and you have to set a row of filters to unscramble them. The other way is to input the exact frequency for a country (you'll have to find it out). These messages can be read immediately.

Throughout the game, memos are constantly being flashed onto the screen, no matter what you're doing. Some just provide information on what various countries are getting up to and some ask you to make a decision. You can ignore, support, criticise or ask for talks.

The longer you play, and the more memos you read and letters you receive, the greater becomes your grasp of the needs and aspirations of each of the countries. This gives you the basis for decisions on whether to provide food, weapons or resources, and what action to take when countries become aggressive.

Obviously some events can be foreseen by use of the satellites and radio. Nipping something in the bud not only stops events escalating but gives you more credibility. At intervals, an assessment of your performance is flashed up.

You start as 'adequate', with a radiation level of 'background'. Make a few bad moves and your rating can easily go down to 'disastrous'. My rating suffered badly when Pakistan managed to destroy Libya. I also intercepted a radio message from the USA asking HQ to replace me — so I sent in the troops.

Only two criticisms, a few action scene interludes wouldn't have been amiss — like controlling the satellite to zap missiles. As it is, there's no action at all. You simply carry on making and implementing decisions. Lastly, there doesn't seem to be any real end to the game. It seems to me that if you're good enough to control all 16 countries you simply carry on playing.

Depite that *Armageddon Man* is an absorbing game. And when you think about it, it's not really that naive in its view of the world.

Bohdan Buciak

Graphics 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7
Overall

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FOOTBALL DIRECTOR

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After a weekend in which I watched my beloved QPR rise to the top of Division One, what more could I want than a good whirl at a football game — wrenching *Football Director* from a disillusioned Mike Pattenden's hands I was off. *Football Director* is the first offering I've seen from this soccer crazed software house in Stevenage, so it was with a certain degree of curiosity that I cast my eye over this.

The packaging was the first thing to catch my eye, it seems to bear a very strange likeness to Imagine's *Super Soccer*, still . . .mustn't grumble. Whilst loading up the game I thought I'd have a customary read of the instructions only to find there weren't any, nothing other than an extensive list of the game's features, and a guide to the prices you can expect to pay for players.

When you have chosen your team (QPR-naturally) you may than either change any other team names (try *'Q.P.R.' to 'Donkey' — Ed.*) and then on to the main menu. The game is controlled by pressing the initial letter of the option you wish to use. The options are:

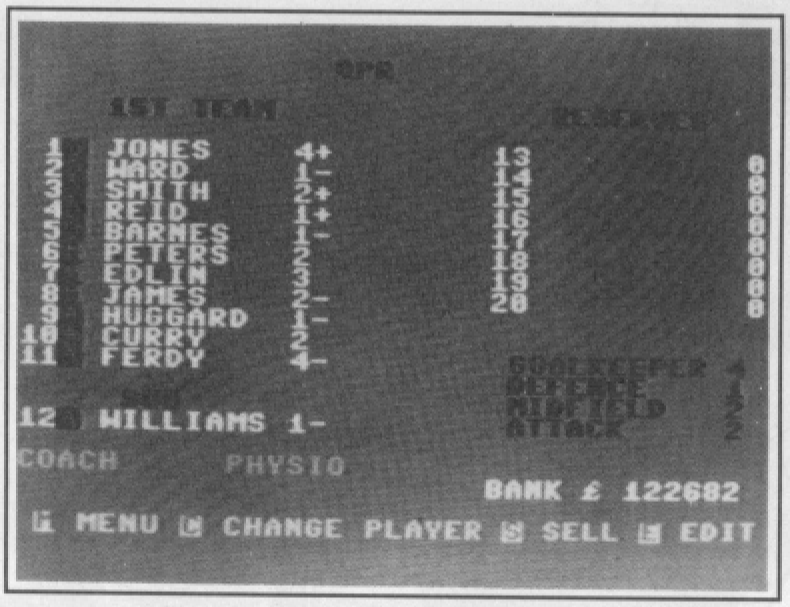
Play Match: get stuck in there, the moment of truth. Can your boys in the league do what they did in training? Only choose this when you are satisfied you have selected your strongest squad, as once you've kicked off you cannot make any other changes for ninety minutes. The match is shown with the two teams names written on screen, and the clock ticks away (a match takes ninety seconds). When someone scores, the goal and the scorer are shown under the team.

After your match is finished the other results from your division are shown, and then your wage bill and weekly news. The weekly news tells you if you made or lost money this week, if any players are injured, and even bills you if there was any crowd trouble.

Check match: This option allows you to size up your opponents, it tells you their league position, their formation, and the skill of their goalkeeper, defence, midfield, and attack, so you can adjust your squad in order to wallop them!

Fixtures: This shows you a table of your previous results and the matches you have left to play in your thirty-eight game season.

Extra training. This option allows you to give extra training to either the goalkeeper, defence, midfield, or the attackers. This is in order to improve their skills. You can train them for any length of time between one to nine hours, but don't give them too long as they may slack or even get injured.



Transfer Market: As you are given only half a million pounds to begin with you ought to be very careful at the transfer market as the striker you buy could have excellent potential. Then again he could be the next Alan Smith! Each player has a certain amount of skill between one and nine. You can expect to pay any thing between £10,000 and £100,000 for a player and the inlay does give you a key to help yourself make successful bids.

Injuries/Goals: This gives you a run down of who is injured, how many goals have been scored, and how many the 'keeper has conceded in your squad.

Bank: As in life itself you can obtain a company loan, but as in life itself it is a very small one with a very large rate of interest. You can also obtain a mortgage should you wish to build a new stand.

Gamble: This tempting option allows you to bet that your team will win the league title, F.A. or League (Littlewoods) Cup, or for the less extravagant of you just to simply gain promotion. You can bet anything up to £100,000.

Employees: At this option you can hire a coach, physio, and a team scout all of which are fairly necessary. You can also hire a youth team manager which at £2000 a week may seem rather expensive, but every so often a promising young lad qualifies to the ranks of the big boys.

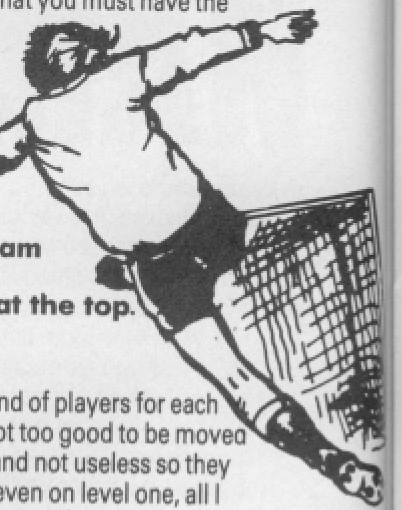
Shares: Every football director is a bit of a capitalist — some more than others (Yes, you Mr Bulstrode!) Watch your share prices rise and fall, and decide when to sell or buy, but take my advice don't sell to Marler Estates!

Insure: I like this. Should any of your players get injured, and you have taken out a policy, you're in the readies for a while.

Build Stand: Why not do just that? Naturally it costs.

Postponements: Simply tells you if there are any.

Level: This is a nasty one. There are three levels easy normal, and hard. With normal you can choose which level you wish to start on, but the nasty evil, wicked, twisted, programming team have been extremely cunning and taught the computer to put you up a level if you are playing too well, and won't allow you to turn it down. I don't wish to sound like a wimp with sour grapes but this is indeed a bitch! If you are bottom of the league and getting thoroughly beaten then you are permitted to continue getting slaughtered on easy level. But then should you start playing half decently it's on to the next level you go which means you'll fly down to the bottom of the league. I've had words with the programmer and I am informed that you must have the perfect blend of players for each division, not too good to be moved up a level and not useless so they don't lose even on level one, all I know is I haven't found the correct formula!

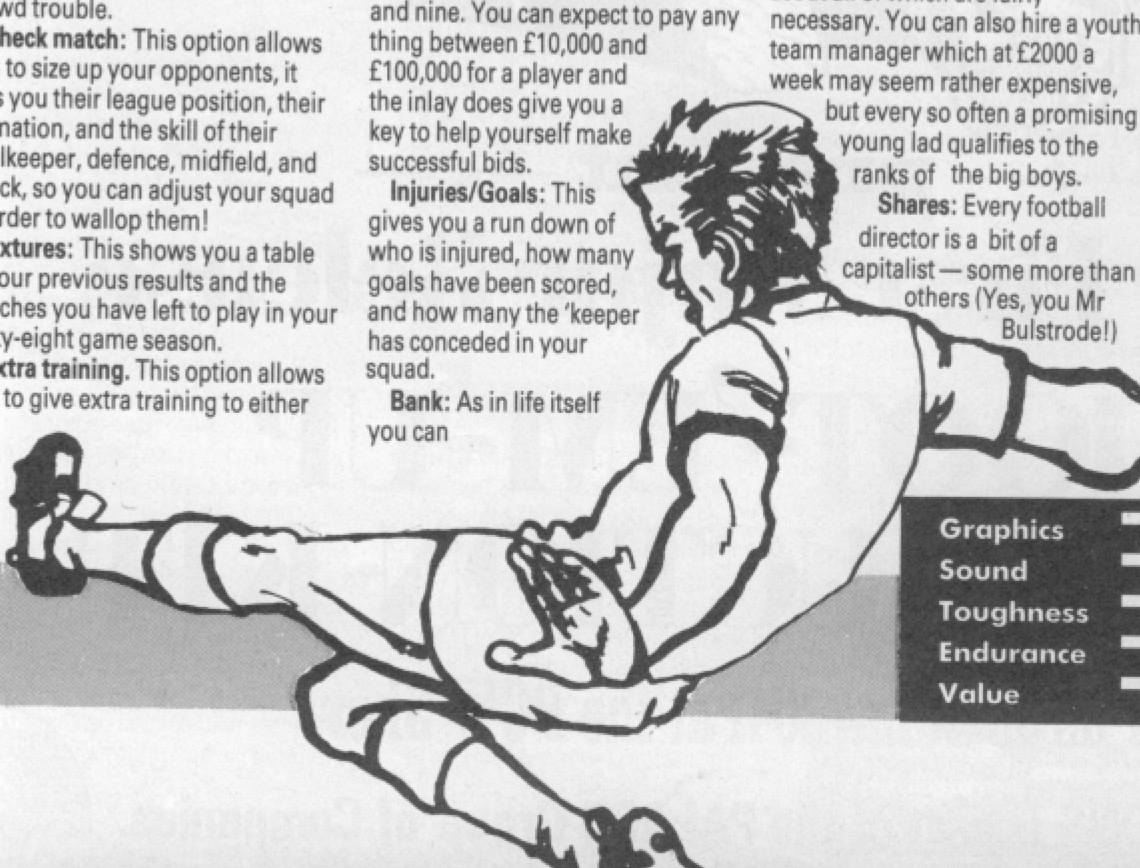


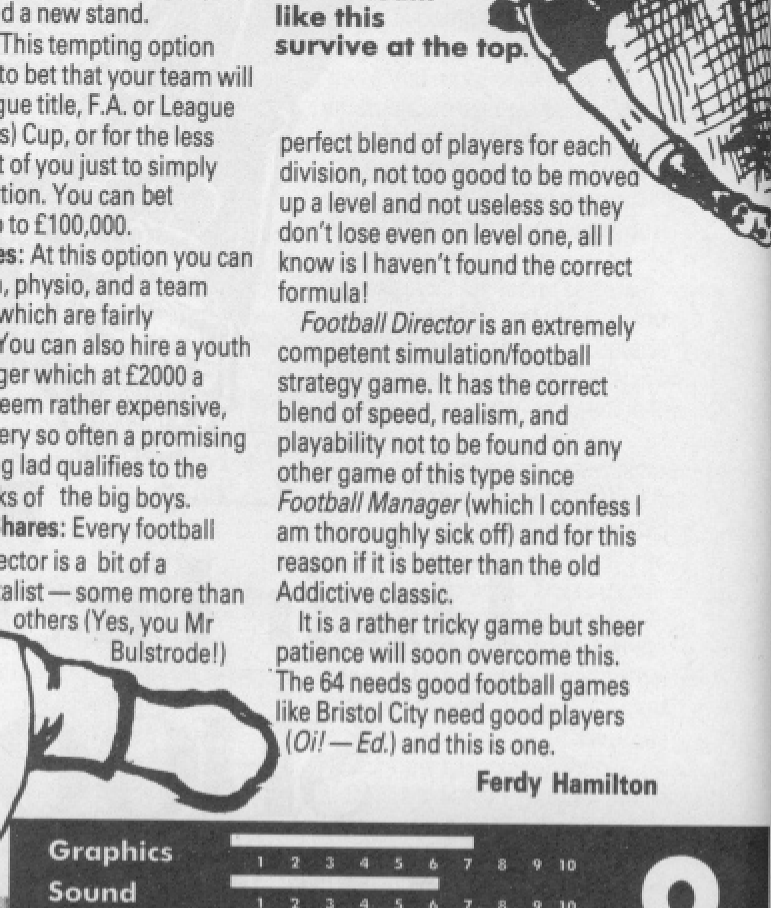
Can a team like this survive at the top.

Football Director is an extremely competent simulation/football strategy game. It has the correct blend of speed, realism, and playability not to be found on any other game of this type since *Football Manager* (which I confess I am thoroughly sick off) and for this reason if it is better than the old Addictive classic.

It is a rather tricky game but sheer patience will soon overcome this. The 64 needs good football games like Bristol City need good players (*Oi! — Ed.*) and this is one.

Ferdy Hamilton







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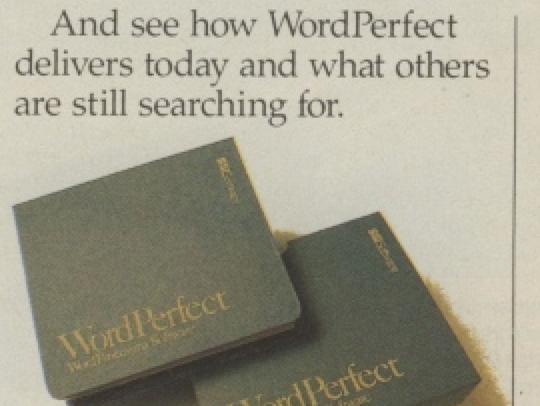
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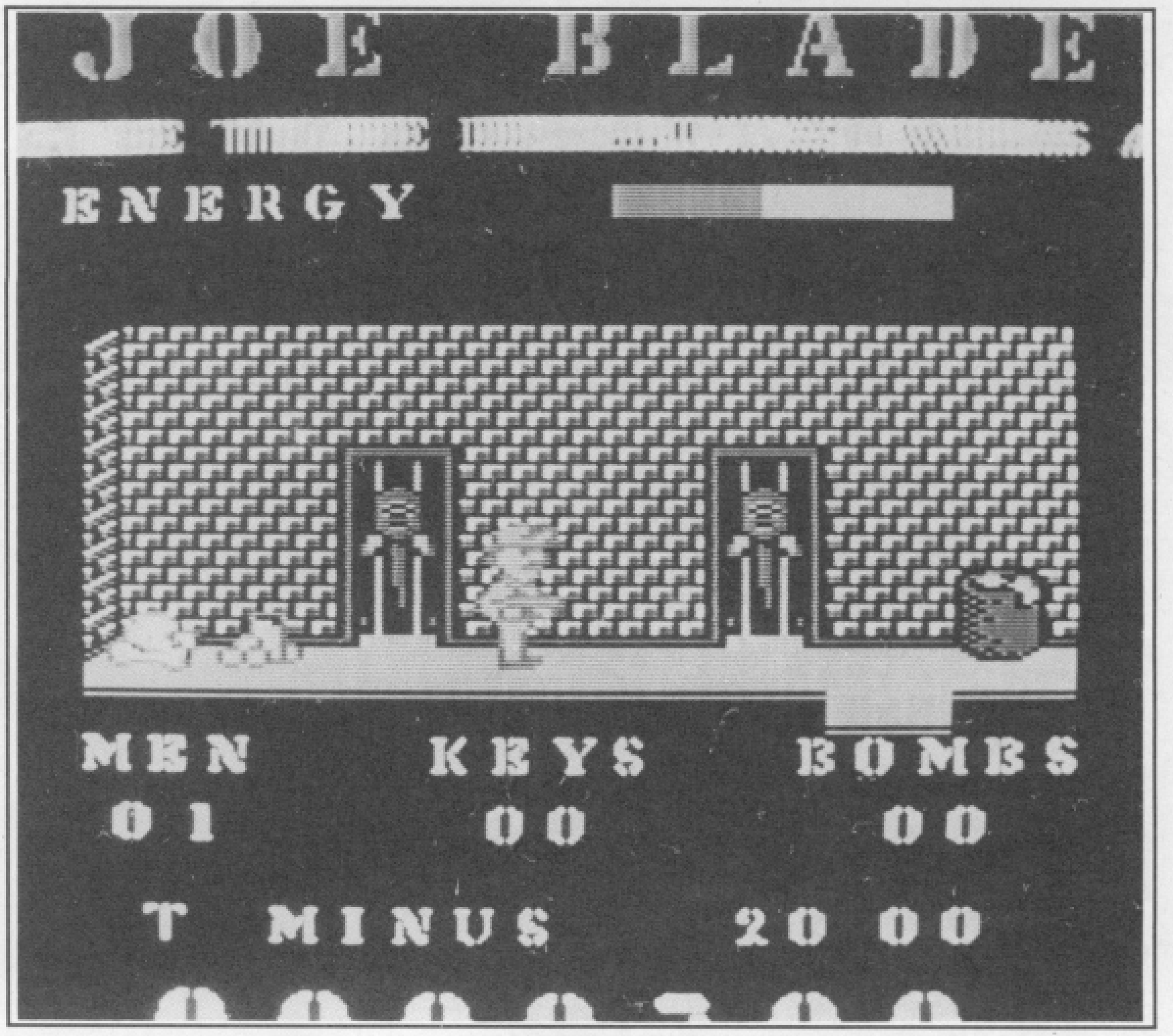
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Screen shots are taken from the C= 64 version.

64/128 Players Price: £1.99/cass

When six world leaders are captured by a terrorist with a name like Crax Bloodfinger, then there's no time for pussy-footing. You gotta send for Joe Blade.

If the cover pic is anything to go by, then Joe's a wild-eyed Tommy who goes around blasting at ammo crates with his sten gun. Probably the product of the *Bazooka Bill* Academy of Charm and Deportment, you think, and you get set for some quick-firing, fast-moving mindless mayhem.

Stirring budget stuff. ▶



So it's a bit of a surprise to find that Joe ambles happily around Bloodfinger's fortified HQ like he's doing the shopping in Safeway's, calmly shooting at the guards who obediently fall into neat parcels of bones. The guards never fire back, either, merely draining Joe's energy should he come into contact with them.

Obviously, then, *Joe Blade* isn't a shoot 'em up at all, and if that's what you're expecting you'll be disappointed. It's more of a maze exploration game, with Joe searching for the hostages, and picking up items and points along the way.

The playing area is pretty huge, with tree-lined pathways connecting buildings constructed like rabbit warrens. There are dozens of similar rooms, with brick walls, barred windows and prison cells, and map-making is essential if you're to avoid travelling around in circles.

The six hostages appear at random throughout the HQ, positioned anew at the start of every game, so you've always got to explore every single room for fear of missing one. Locked doors can be opened with keys which the guards, as is usual in computer games, have left scattered around on the floor. There's also food and ammo to be found, and uniforms.

Putting on a uniform does two things – it makes Joe look indistinguishable from the enemy, so that movement becomes confusing, and it also renders him (temporarily) invulnerable.

Joe Blade

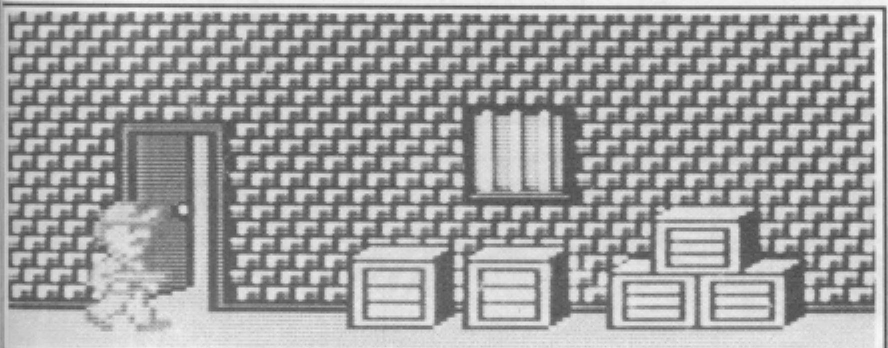
The graphics are colourful, with solid sprites moving against detailed and deliberately repetitive backgrounds. There's some adequate music to begin with, and a few assorted effects which sound no different from a million other games.

But I've left the best bit 'til last. It's not enough to find all six hostages, you've also got to locate and prime six bombs. As soon as Joe bumps into one of these, the priming screen flips up, displaying a five-letter access code. Using the joystick to swap letters, you've got half a minute to put them into alphabetical order before it explodes in your face. If you succeed, then the countdown starts, leaving you 20 minutes to free the hostages and find – and prime – the remaining five bombs.

It's a simple device, but amazingly effective, and it's hard to stop yourself panicking, swapping letters like crazy, each time you start to prime a bomb. And though Joe can jump over the bombs to avoid priming them, he's got to get round to it sooner or later, and that'll mean finding them again.

Ridiculously simple, ridiculously addictive, *Joe Blade* is the most enjoyable game I've played this month. That probably says more about the other games than it does about this one, but at £1.99 it's got to be worth playing.

Bill Scolding



Graphics
Sound
Toughness
Endurance
Value

7 Overall

EVENING S

64/128
Hewson
Price:
£8.95/cass
£12.95/disk

Evening Star is Hewson's second steam train program, following in the tracks of the highly successful *Southern Belle*, released back in '85.

Like the earlier program, it's a locomotive simulation with all the stops pulled out. It tells you all you might possibly want to know about steam trains, and quite a lot that you probably don't. Comprehensive just isn't the word.

This time you're in the cab of a class BR9F locomotive, the apparently legendary 92220 Evening Star which hauled the Pines Express along the old Somerset & Dorset line before it was closed in 1966. Its stations were demolished and its track beds turned over to supermarket car-parks. Nicknamed the Slow and Dirty, it carried holidaymakers from Bath to the dubious delights of Bournemouth, passing through the Mendip Hills and the North Somerset Coalfield often along single track railway.

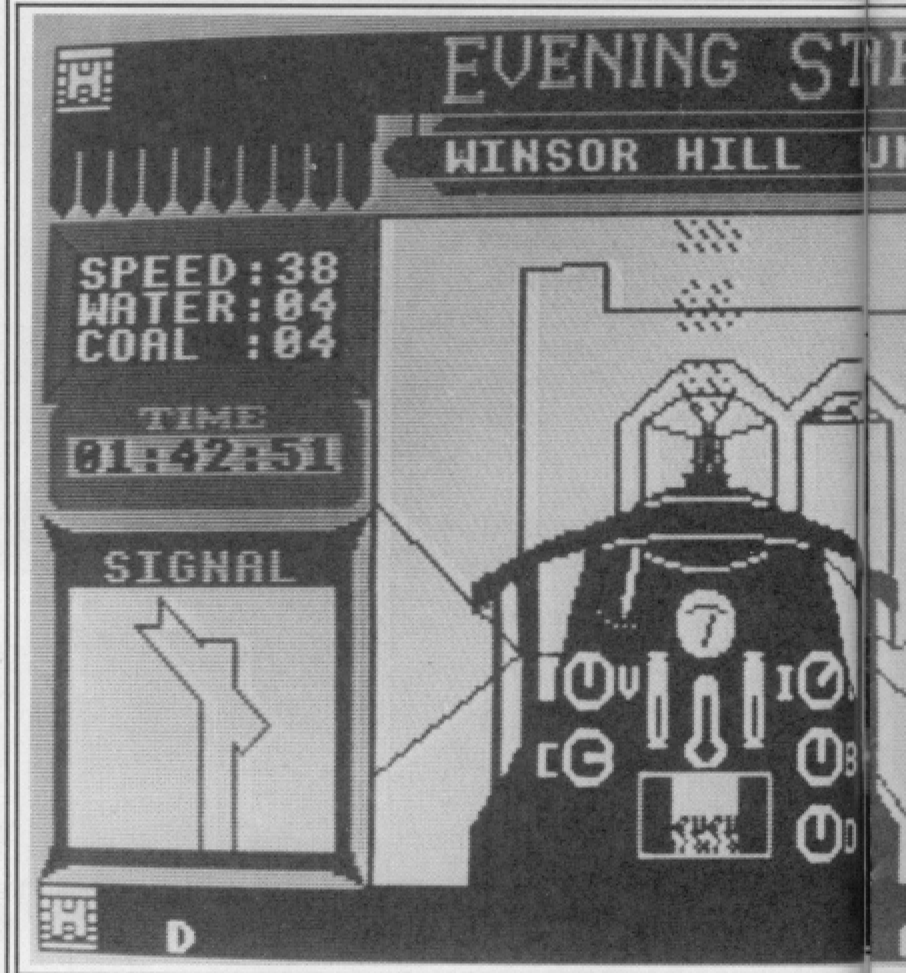
The terrain, track and timetables are very different, then, from the London to Brighton run of *Southern Belle*, and that is probably sufficient reason for owners of that simulation to splash out on what is superficially, at least, a very similar program.

But *Evening Star* is different in other ways, too. Programmers Mike Male and Bob Hillyer have taken on board suggestions and criticisms and have improved the screen display as well as adding options which allow you to travel only part of the line, or to resume a run if you unfortunately commit some fatal error.

The main part of the screen is taken up with a view of the engine cab and its controls, and the track and scenery ahead. As the train gathers speed (with appropriate chuff-chuff noises) platforms, sidings, signal boxes and gasometers fly past, and once you're in open country, the landmarks include the various tunnels, bridges and viaducts. Line workings, whch vary from run to run, are also shown. All this is picked out in moving line graphics against a white background — understandably limited but nevertheless effective, with each landmark authentic and recognisable.

Around this are set the various data displays, such as speed, coal and water reserves, time and distance, gradient, and the status of the next signal. Above appear signs naming the next landmark or station, and below is a scrolling message window for crucial information along the lines of 'fusible plugs gone'.

As well as keeping an eye on all these, there are also the gauges in the cab to watch. It's here that your meddling with the keyboard

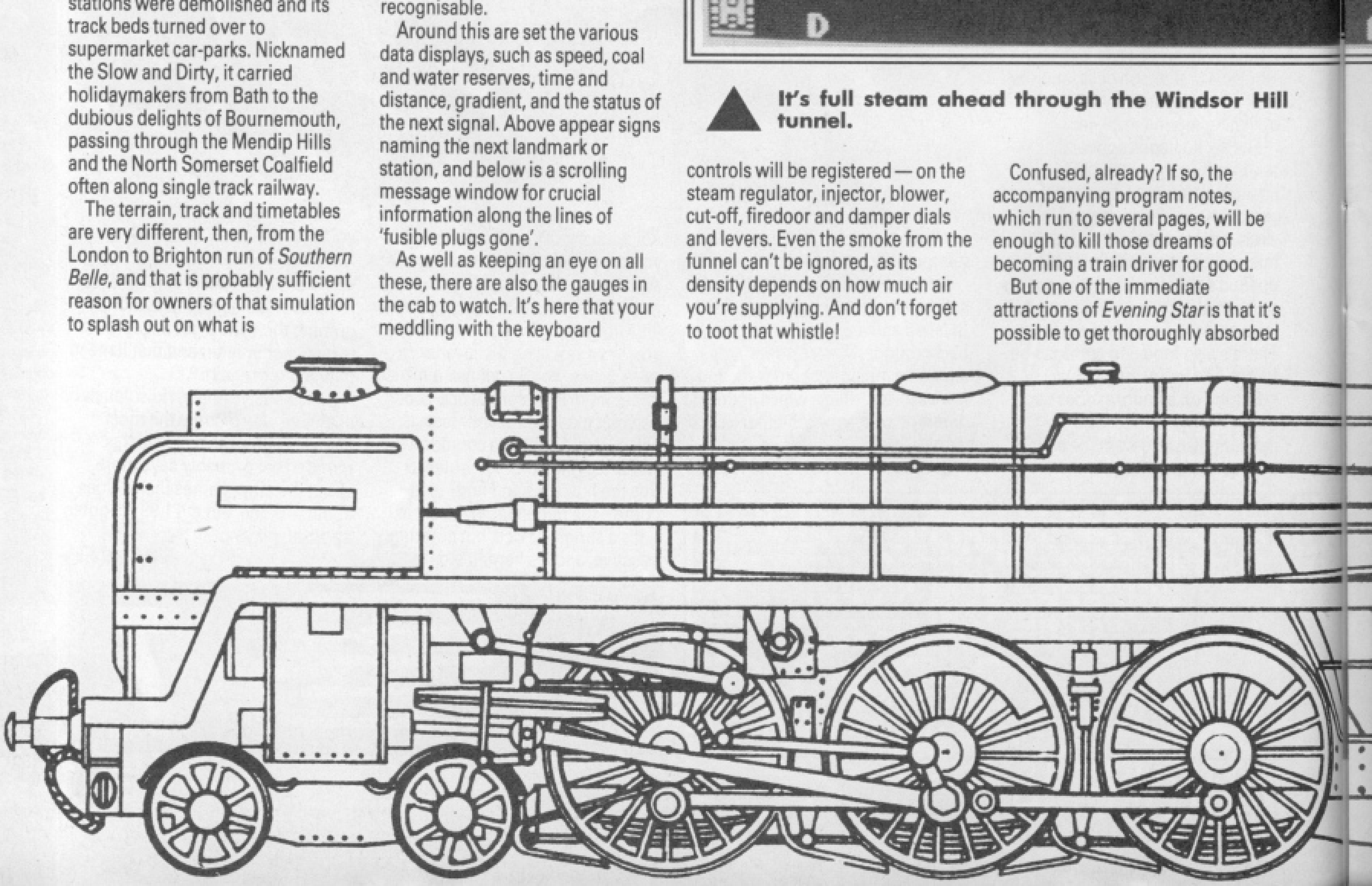


It's full steam ahead through the Windsor Hill tunnel.

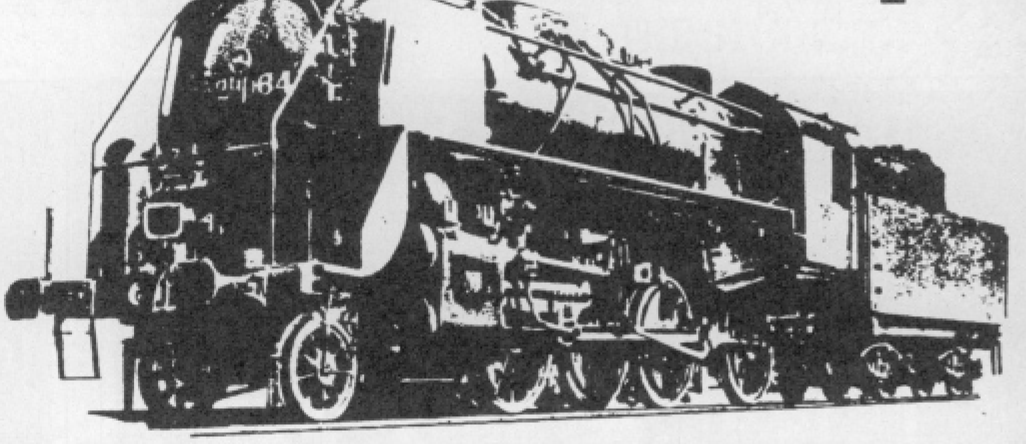
controls will be registered — on the steam regulator, injector, blower, cut-off, firedoor and damper dials and levers. Even the smoke from the funnel can't be ignored, as its density depends on how much air you're supplying. And don't forget to toot that whistle!

Confused, already? If so, the accompanying program notes, which run to several pages, will be enough to kill those dreams of becoming a train driver for good.

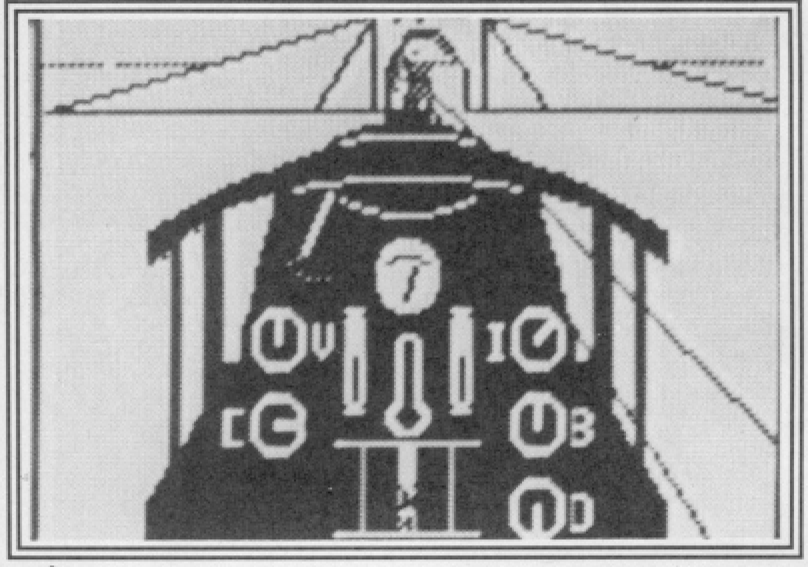
But one of the immediate attractions of *Evening Star* is that it's possible to get thoroughly absorbed



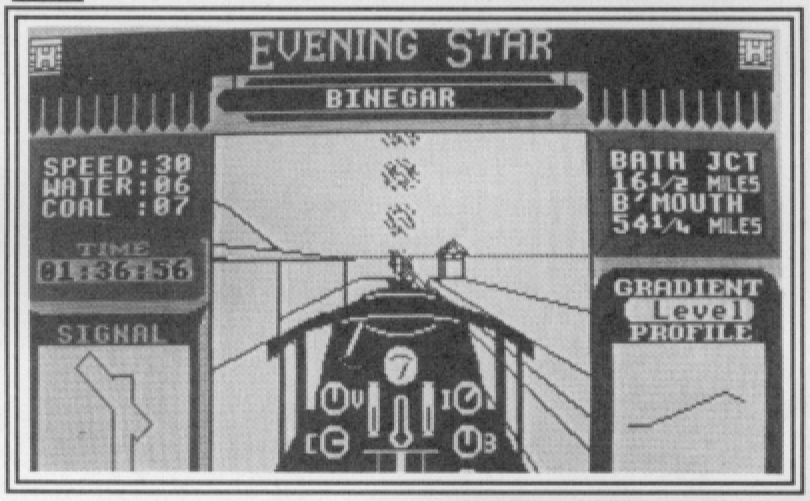
STAR







Masbury, and another tunnel looms.



Erm, chuff, chuff?

at even a beginner's level. The multitude of option menus allow you to cut your teeth gradually, starting with a training run from Bath to nearby Evercreech Junction, and you can choose how many or how few of the controls you want to mess around with, letting the computer deal with the rest. From there you can progress to coping with speed limits and signals, record-breaking, non-stop runs and even problem trips with late departures and ice on the line.

Your performance is rated according to safety, timekeeping, and economy of fuel and water, with detailed notes on where exactly you fouled up, such as making as rough stop at Templecombe or failing to sound the whistle at the Devonshire Tunnel.

It's worth pointing out that the journeys are played out in real time — that is, it will take you the same amount of time to complete a run to Bournemouth as it would do in real life (several hours). And though you can accelerate the time by four or five times, you're going to need all the time you've got if you're going to control even half the gauges, valves and other knobbly bits.

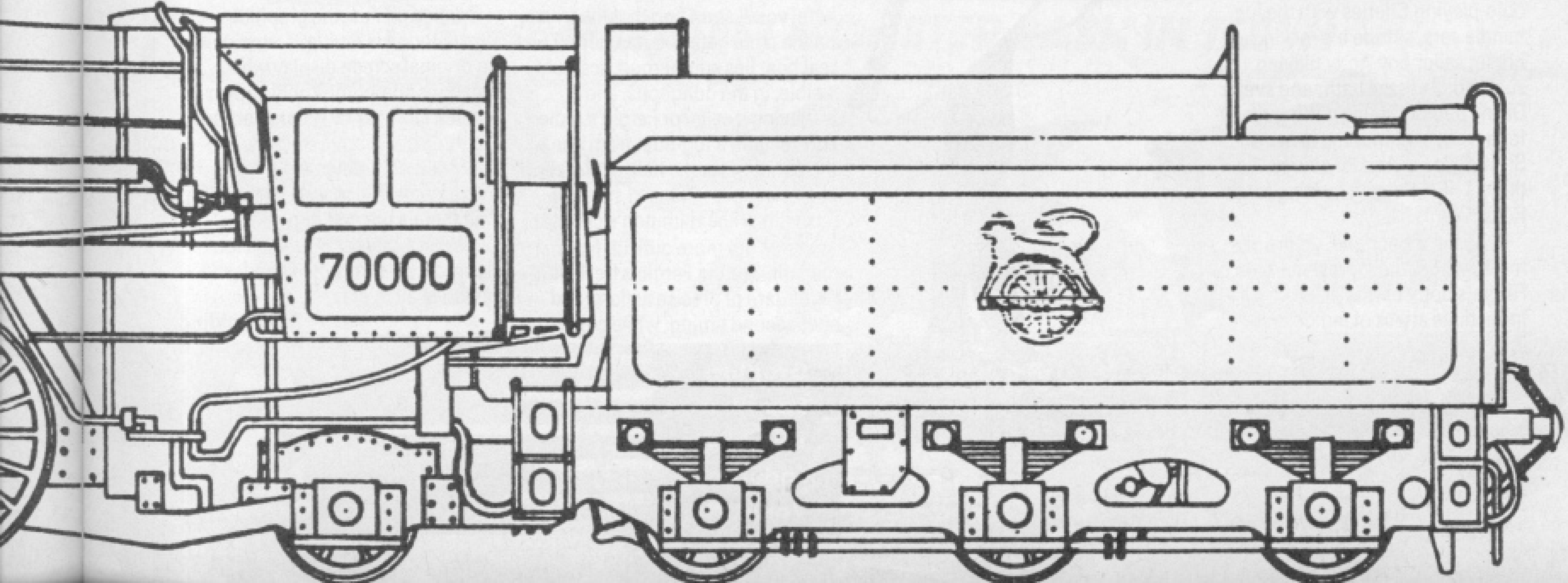
There's much, much more to *Evening Star* than the sketchy outline suggests, and it's undoubtedly one of the most realistic simulations around. It's also something which is ideally suited to a computer. There's no other way that you could relive the Age of Steam so completely without actually riding on the footplate.

For railway buffs it has to be an essential buy, and for the rest of us, who don't know one end of a fusible plug from the other, it's still an absorbing and fatally addictive slice of nostalgia.

Bill Scolding

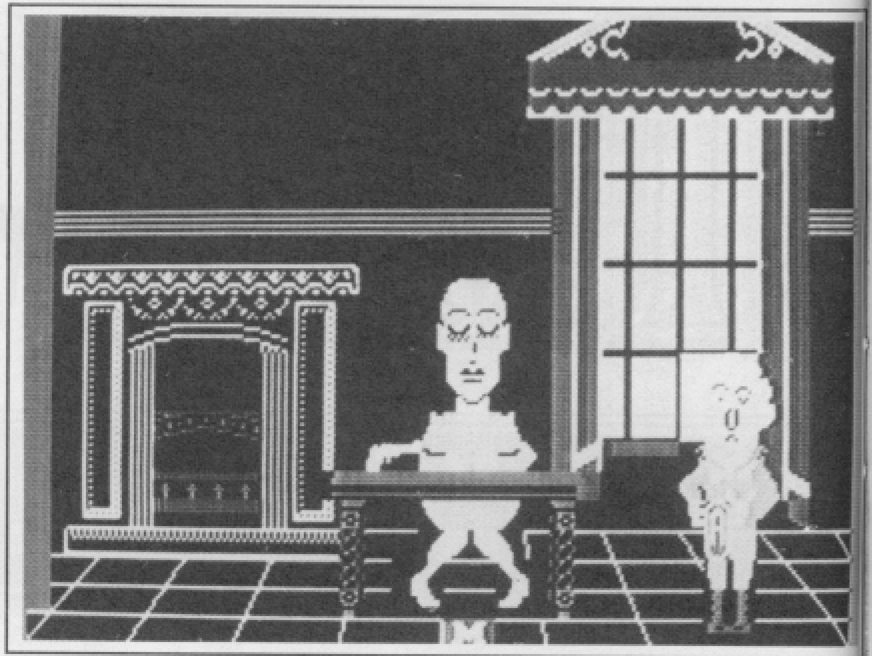
Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8 Overall





▲ **Flunky prepares to sell his story to Sport on Sunday.**



▲ **So now you know, Randy Andy has monogrammed towels.**

Flunky

64/128
Piranha
Price: £9.95/cass £14.95/disk

If you're a fan of those crazy, fun-loving Royals, then *Flunky* will be right up your street.

Flunky gives you the chance the meet the Windsors at home. There's polo-playing Charles with the jug handle ears, astride his rocking horse; sailor boy Andy playing submarines in the bath; and svelte Di and chunky Fregie getting ready for a night of slumming down at Stringfellows. And, of course, there's HRH Herself, hunting for the Royal Corgis.

If, on the other hand, you're like me, to whom the merest mention of Fergie's botty brings on an immediate attack of indigestion, then such affectionate rib-tickling caricatures will probably leave you cold.

Flunky is veteran Don Priestley's first game for Piranha since *Trapdoor*, and the fourth game to use the colossal sprites which have become his trademark. Immediately attractive, these giant graphics appeal to game-players who wouldn't otherwise be interested in solving puzzles.



Starting out with only matches and an autograph book, your much-harassed manservant has to travel to the very depths of Buck House to fulfill his employers' every whim, for only then can he collect an autograph from each Royal Personage. To make life doubly difficult, the Palace is patrolled by homicidal guards, deadly polo balls and a Chinaman with a chopper.

In each apartment there's a digital timer, which commences countdown when Flunky's received his first orders. Once a task is completed, whatever time remains is the score, and Flunky then sets offf on his next errand.

The tasks are, however, stupidly difficult, often relying not so much on powers of logical deduction, but on using apparently irelevant objects in unlikely ways. When Andy asks for a boat to play with in the bath, you'll soon find that the frigate on the table gets you nowhere. The real boat lies submerged, scarcely visible, in the dungeons, and retrieving it calls for Fergie's radio control unit, a tug-boat from one of the paintings in the hall, exploration of a secret passage, and some hi-jinx with Willie Hamilton's skeleton.

Things get more difficult from then on. Getting Fergie's freckles is a nightmare of precise actions and split-second timing, while collecting Charles' polo balls requires little logical thought but some impossibly tricky manoeuvring, as does the shoot-out with Di's flying wig.

If at any time Flunky puts one foot wrong, the guards are summoned to execute him. They can be avoided if he's nimble, but they only give up after five attempts, and that consumes so much precious time that it's better to surrender and sacrifice one of Flunky's six lives.

If none of this sounds too difficult, bear in mind that I was working with a complete Cheat Sheet, explaining exactly how to perform each errand. After hours of play, I still failed totally to achieve any score at all. The time limits are just too short, and the necesary actions too pointlessly precise, to make the game anything other than frustrating.

The game irritates in other ways, too. The abort option is located on the opening menu screen. Otherwise, to restart a game Flunky must either light all the fires and then walk back to the menu, or else continually commit suicide by running into a guard. But in some locations, neither of these can be used, so if Flunky gets stuck in the dungeon he has to wait until the time expires.

Despite all this, the graphicf presentation is faultless, employing an original screen display where locations sometimes only appear in small windows. The characters are big, bright and bold, cleverly animated right down to lip movements and mobile eyebrows. And there's the odd ditty too.

It's just a pity that *Flunky* is too damn clever for its own good, and no fun at all to play.

Bill Scolding

Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

5 Overall

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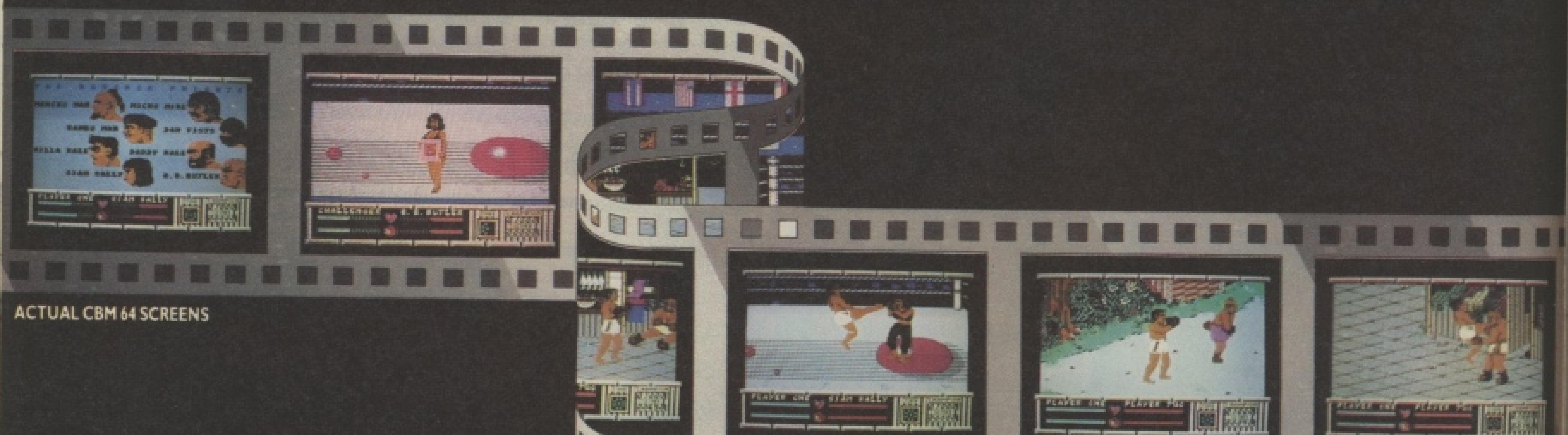
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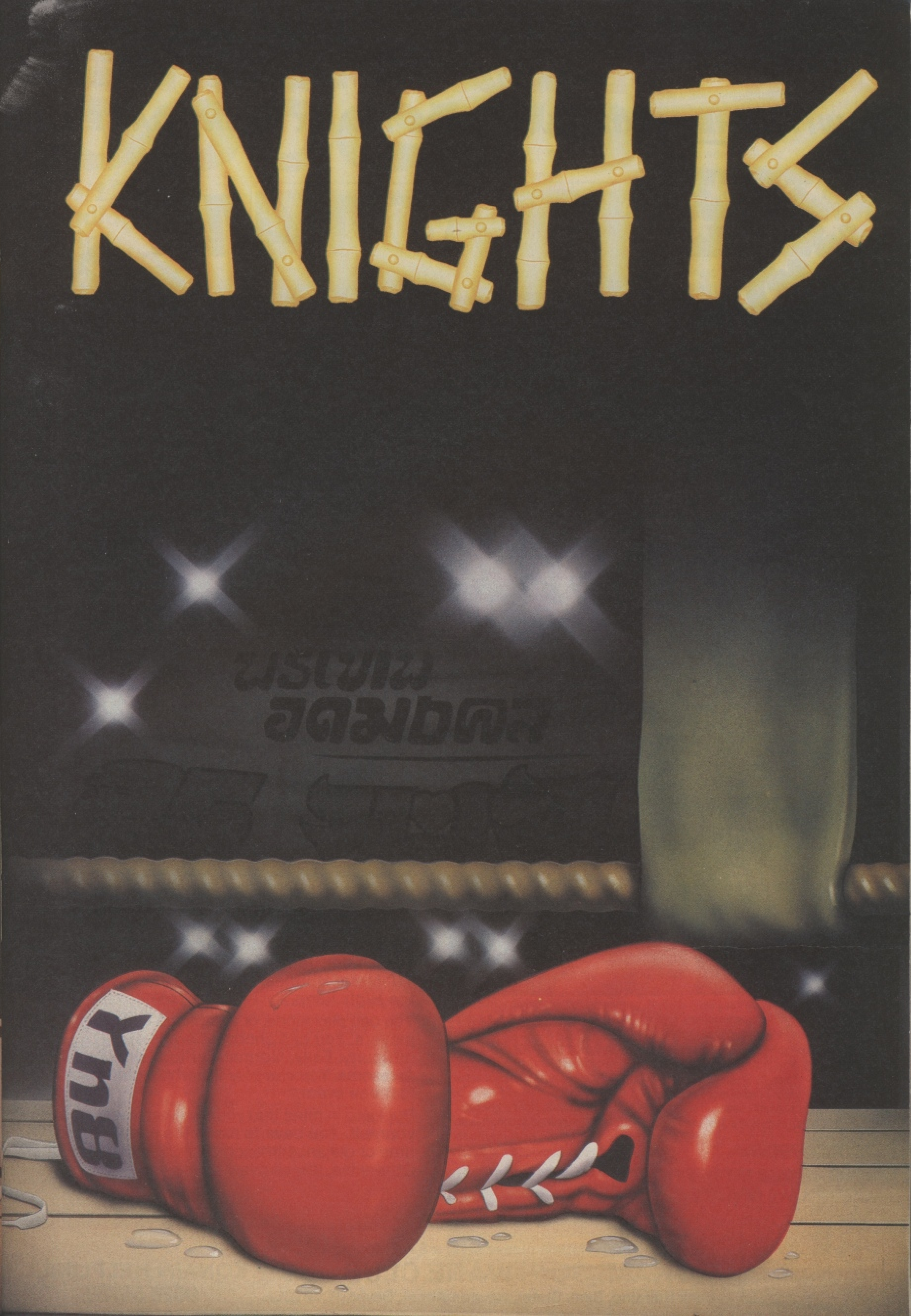


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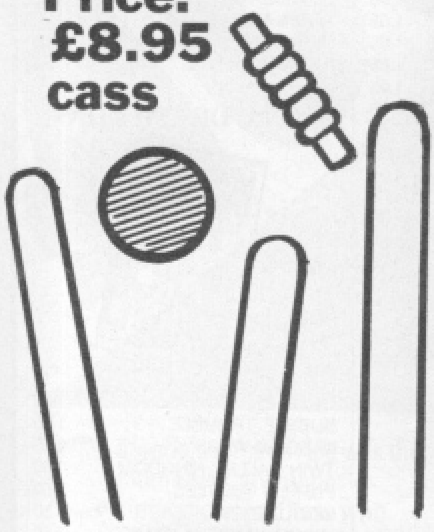
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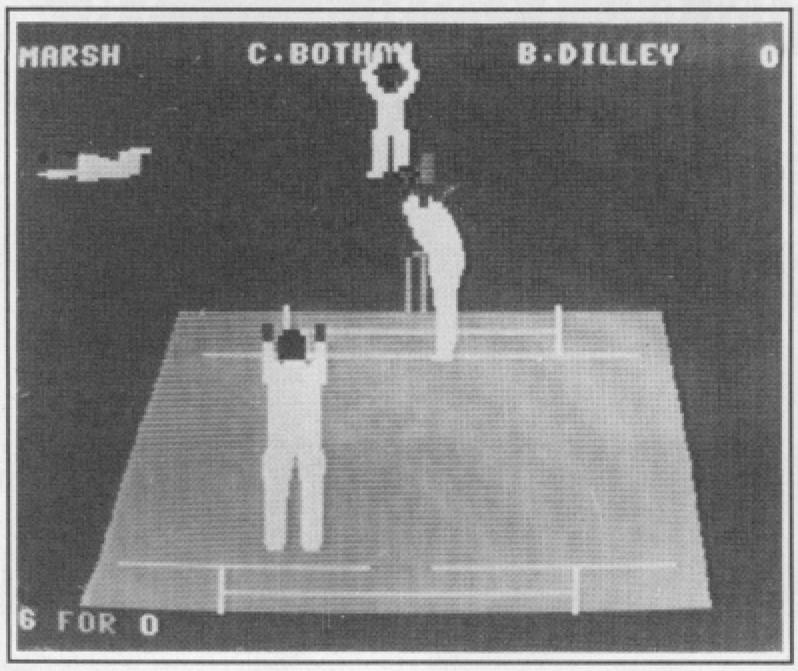
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GRAHAM GOOCH'S

64/128
Audiogenic
Price:
£8.95
cass





All-Star Cricket



▲ **That's the kind of Aussie scorecard we like.**



▲ **And he's holed out to square leg. . .**

All-Star Cricket is a souped up version of *Graham Gooch's Test Cricket* which was first released a couple of years ago. The major improvements have been to the realism of the play. Further team lists have been added, as well as an England And Australia XI, you can now choose from the West Indies, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the World XI and an all time XI. The team squads contain all the names you would expect to see from the 1987 season.

As before, there are two modes, of play; arcade mode and simulation mode — supposedly for the experts. Arcade mode is for those who like to get out there and give it some welly. Dont worry too much about style or technique, just give it a good tonk. But before you're let loose with the bat there are one or two other things to be taken care of.

The first thing you must decide is the kind of game you want. You can slog it out over the full two innings; unlimited overs, or alternative go for a limited overs match. Next you are asked if you want to practice. If you haven't played before the answer to this questions is most definitely yes. Otherwise, unless you're particularly fortunate or unusually gifted you'll end up losing 10 wickets for no runs.

It'll take you about 15 minutes to get the hang of batting, all that's required is that you hit the fire button at just the right time to produce the perfect stroke. Too soon and the ball will drop comfortably into the hands of an outfielder, too late and the diving slip fielder will make a spectacular catch. To help you get it right, a coloured square in the top left of the screen tells you how good your timing is; yellow means too soon, blue too late and red spot on.

Bowling is more straightforward. You can choose between a leg or off side attack just by pushing the joystick in the appropriate direction and pressing fire. When the bowler starts his run up waggling the stick gives makes him put that bit more into it. The pitch can also be determined by firing when you want the bowler to let go of the ball, though he won't make the embarrassing mistake of hanging on to it if you forget. Of course, like the real thing, just because you decide to bowl outside the off stump doesn't mean that's what will happen. And during an actual game you will find that a bowler's effectiveness will diminish if you keep him on too long and tire him.

◀ **Graham Gooch returns to the 64 side.**

The mechanics of the arcade mode are exactly as I've described the practice. During an actual game the toss decides which side will bat first. Your view of the action is the same as you get on the TV — looking down the wicket from the bowlers end. Assuming you're batting the bowler will automatically take his run up and bowl, then it's all down to you. At the end of each over you get a full breakdown of the score including bowling averages and, during the second team's innings the required run rate.

One nice touch that's been added is the option to view an action replay of a wicket, though sadly its not in slow motion, and a digitised "howzat", though its not the most excitable appeal I've ever heard.

Simulation mode would probably appeal to those with more of a tactical appreciation of the game, though I must admit I thought it was less exciting than arcade mode. If you felt like it having picked sides and tossed, you could sit back and watch an entire test match in simulation mode without lifting a finger. Those who want to take a more active role can influence the bowling — leg or off side attack, and force a more or less aggressive style of batting. But the key decisions in simulation mode are when to change the bowling and who to bring on.

The improvements Audiogenic have made certainly justify the games re-release and it's well worth a look if you didn't get it back in '85. In addition to the improvements I've already mentioned the graphics seem to have been enhanced — the player's action is now more lifelike. There is of course something to moan about in every game and here it's the quality of the umpiring (*Ken is not a Pakistani— Ed's note*) they don't seem to be able to tell the difference between a bat and a pad. Apart from that, a first class game of cricket.

Richie McMahon

Graphics	7
Sound	5
Toughness	5
Endurance	8
Value	7

7 Overall

64/128
Cascade
Price: £9.95/cass

ACE 2

Cascade's original *Ace* was the ultimate in air combat simulations for those who just wanted a good blast and weren't too worried about the details. Let's face it, when you're seriously into the business of letting rip with the old heat-seeking and radar-guided missiles the last thing you want to worry about is whether you left the undercarriage down, or forgot to trim the flaps.

So concerned are Cascade that the everyday mediocre tasks associated with flying (like taking off and landing and keeping the plane in the air) might spoil your enjoyment, they've gotten rid of them altogether. Should you inadvertently smash into the ground at 600 mph — the kind of thing that can only be avoided by tedious attention to the instruments — you can pretend it just didn't happen. The purists can switch off the cheat option if they so desire.

It's not only the conveniently forgotten realities of aerodynamics that makes *Ace 2* different, this is a two player game. You can, of course, battle with a computer-controlled adversary as is the case with most of the air combat simulators around, but Ace 2 gives you the opportunity to kill your friends as well. That sounds pretty appealing doesn't it? It's also a bit confusing to begin with because there is two of everything on the screen which is divided horizontally so both pilots can see what's going on.

The instrument panel and cockpit view for plane one occupies the top half of the screen, with that for plane two below it. Apart from slight variances in detail of the instrument panel, both planes are identical. Each is armed with a cannon which has a range of a mile, heat seeking missiles with an eight mile range and radar guided missiles which are effective up to 25 miles. The planes also carry chaff and flares which can be dropped at an opportune moment to decoy incoming missiles. The joystick is used to manoeuvre in the usual way i.e. dive/climb and roll. Each player has a separate block of keys controlling power, weapon selection and map.

A *dogfight* option is available, but there is more to the game than slugging it out with air to air missiles. The country of plane one has sent a ship to spy on the country of plane two — a desert country with a western coastline. Naturally enough country Two isn't too happy about this at all and sends out a plane to destroy the spy ship. Country One does just what you'd expect and sends an aircraft carrier to destroy Plane One and the radar station it was spying on in the first place. This scenario is about the only thing in the game that by any stretch of the imagination approximates to real life.

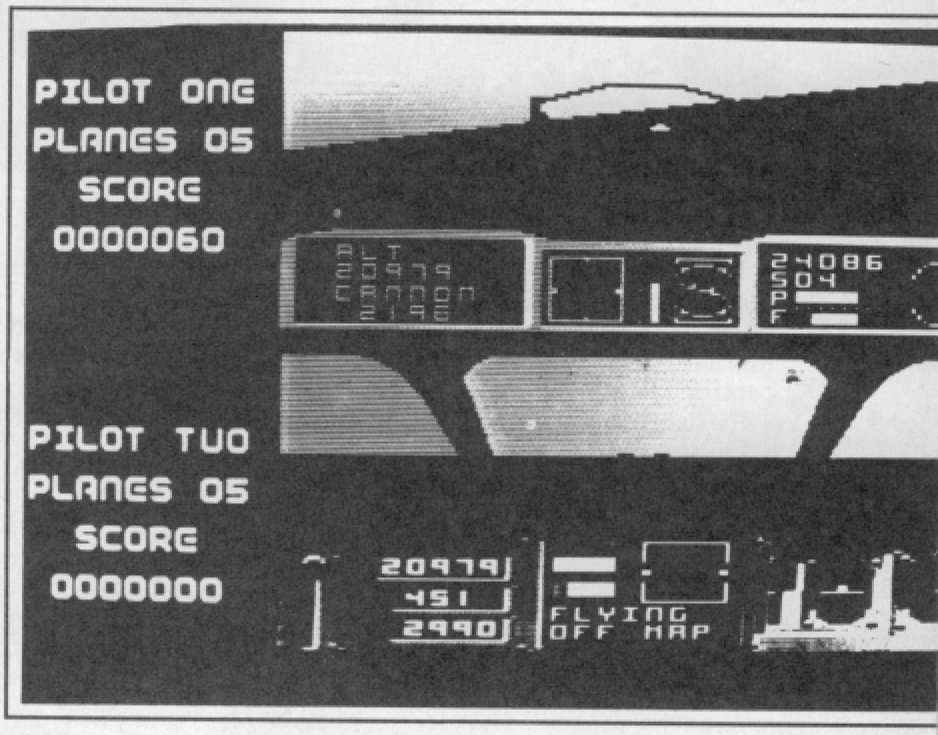
So as well as shooting down all of your opponent's planes you must attack and destroy the radar station or the aircraft carrier, depending on whose side you are on. This is probably a lot easier if you're playing a friend, as the computer is mercillessly accurate. As soon as it's within range it lets rip with radar guided missiles and before you know it you're scatterd about the hemisphere. You can make things easier on yourself by setting the skill level to one (it goes up to 20). Other variants are the number of planes each side can start with, crash detection (on or off) and number of missile hits required for a kill. You can also choose what weapons you will carry before setting out on a mission.

A useful trick I discovered is to set crash detection off and land on the sea. This renders your plane impervious to enemy missiles — all your opponents can do is circle until their fuel runs low. You can then take off and give chase — it's much easier. (*Cheat! Ed*)

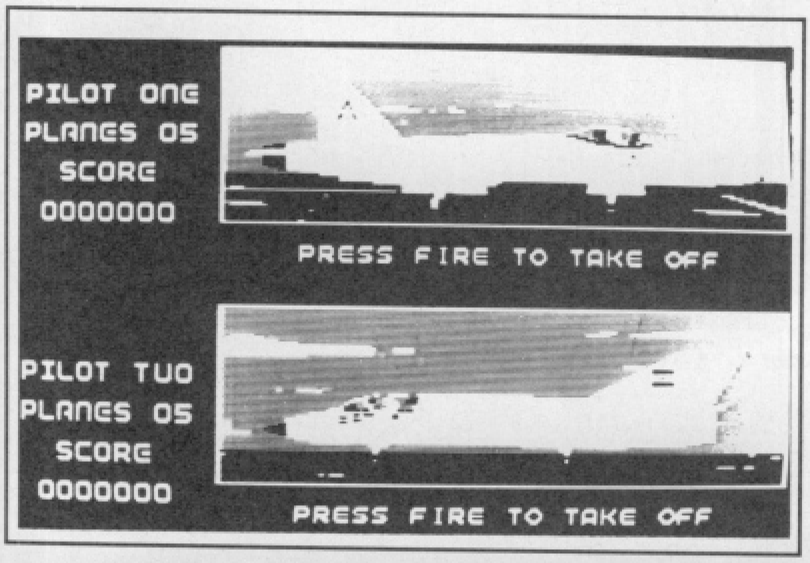
There will undoubtedly be the purists who put down this kind of thing because it's not true to life So what? Realism isn't everything. If it was, flight simulators would say things like 'you can't fly today because there's a strike at the airport', or 'you haven't got time, your dinner's ready in half an hour'. So as far as I'm concerned there's nothing wrong with that. Having said that, almost too much is taken for granted. To land, you just fly off the edge of the map and you're down.

I'm not saying *Ace 2* is too easy, the combat is really hard, but a five year old could fly the thing. Nonetheless it does give you the chance to match yourself against a human opponent and on that basis alone it's in a class of its own.

Ken MCMahon



▲ **Fairly typical split screen shoot 'em up.**



▼ **If only . . .**

Graphics 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7 Overall

TRAXXION

64/128
CRL

Price: £9.95

Traxxion is billed as a follow-up to *Tau Ceti*, the action supposedly taking place on a space platform high above the planet's surface. Any resemblance to that old classic ends in the packaging.

The story behind the game is that a comet has struck the space station, overloading the nuclear reactor. This will explode in the not too distant future, i.e. about an hour from now and you must escape by travelling along 'the track' in your Robocar until you find 'the Exit', avoiding the numerous hazards along the way. These range from the simple out-of-control Robocars, which can be shot and destroyed, to the ridiculously dangerous crossroads and sliding sections of road, which tend to kill you with monotonous regularity.

The gameplay consists of your Robocar travelling along a fixed road, unable to stop or leave its predetermined route, shooting at various objects. You are able, by hitting specific objects, todelay the reactor's meltdown, change the track ahead of you, destroy other cars, and teleport nearer to the finish. It is at this point, when you start playing, that the game really begins to get on your nerves.

The most aggravating part of actually playing is that of firing, which is achieved using the rotating turret mounted on top of your car. Unfortunately, the rotating is performed by pushing the joystick left or right to move the turret clockwise or anticlockwise, rather than by aiming it absolutely using the joystick. This means that if you are trying to hit one particular target, such as a teleport, you usually find that just as the gun has rotated into position, the car changes direction, as it has just entered a bend or such like, and the gun, with the car, is now pointing somewhare completely different.

Next on the list of annoyances is the general display. Yuk. The track glows with a putrid fluorescence designed to make your eyes pop, and the whole style of display looks about four years old. Possibly the worst aspect, though, is the variety of extremely similar-looking parts of the landscape which all have different purposes, clearly defined in multiple shades of grey for ease of identification.

The game also suffers from a common ailment amongst recent games — that of keyboard AND joystick control; contrary to programmers' beliefs, it is actually not particularly enjoyable to have to whip your hand off the joystick, whack the key in question and get your hand back on the joystick again fast enough so as not to be destroyed. In this case, you must do this to turn the Robocar around — a frequent operation as you often find yourself heading for a dead-end, having taken a wrong turn at the last fork in the road.

The game does have *some* useful little bits, however, such as the ability to save your position. Whilst not all that original, it is unusual to see this feature on what is basically a shoot 'em up, and had the game been better would probably have lured me into playing it for some time.

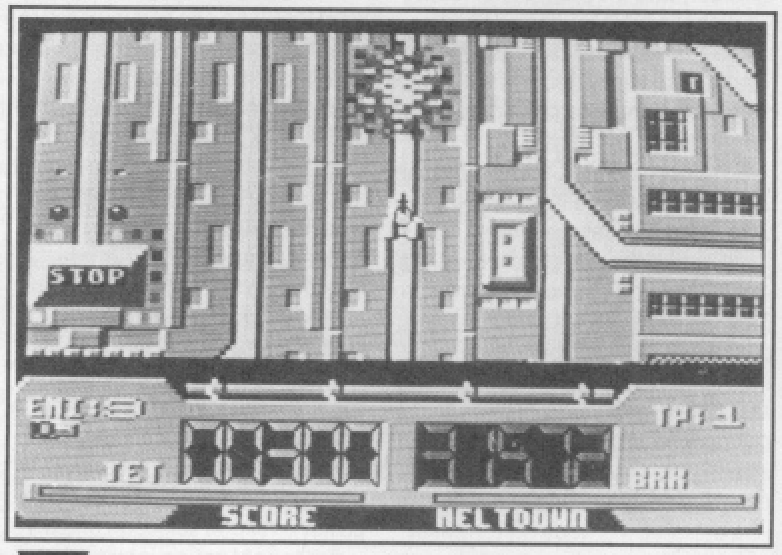
Overall, though, this game is bad. Its gameplay reminds me of an ancient Alligata game called *Hypercircuit*, although that was actually more fun, and the feeling in a lot of the game is that of not being in control — when you've just bene plunged into a dead-end alley by a randomly changing crossroads for the hundredth time.

Traxxion is just the latest of many games to fall into the "naff follow-up" category that seems to be growing all the time. CRL, the hit-and-miss company who have definitely missed this time, must realise that you can't disguise a bad game, but are probably hoping that you sell one.

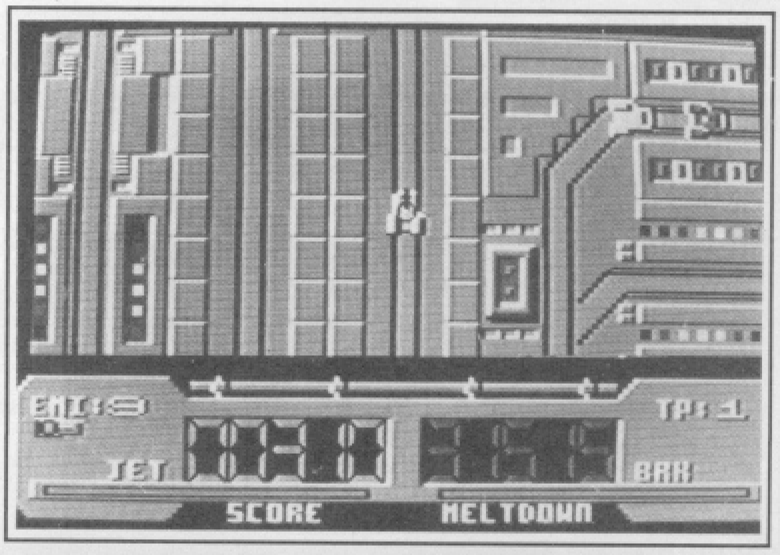
Dan Gilbert



Wow, an explosion.



***Traxxion*: a grizzly grey mess.**

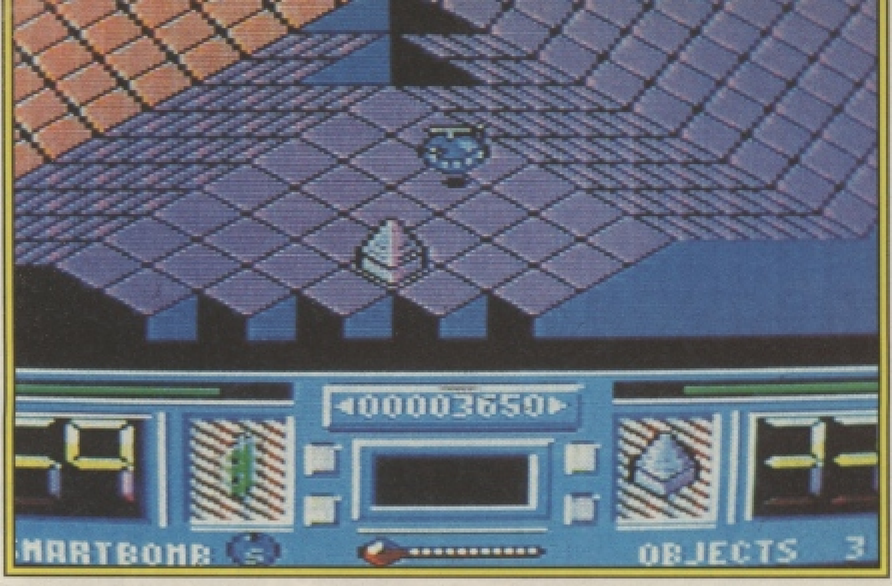


Graphics
Sound
Toughness
Endurance
Value

3 Overall



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That's one of the energy thingies you have to pick up.



RED L.E.D.

C.U. Screen Star

64/128 Starlight Software

Price: £9.99/cass £12.95/disk

Red L.E.D. is a go-faster stripes, flared wheel arch, fluffy dice version of Marble Madness. If you managed to conquer the Electronic Arts offering and you still haven't had enough of Legoland graphics, don't pick up another game before you've bought this one.

The idea of *Red L.E.D.* is simple and conforms to the strict *Marble Madness* specification of falling off as often as possible. But there are loads more frills to make it loads more challenging. You're confronted with a network of 37 interlinked screens. Your task it to make a left to right link between all the screens, indicated as hexagons on the grid display. And you have an hour in which to do it.

You capture a particular scree collecting the specified number energy pods (there are usually f of these and they look a bit like pyramids). Then you must find t exit, which appears as a hole marked out by four flashing arrc The arrows won't flash unless you've got all the energy pods. T what do you do? You jump dow — like a lemming.

Once a screen is captured, it's indicated in flashing colours on the grid. If you're zapped before capturing a screeen, that screen is irretrievably lost and appears in white.

Instead of three lives you get three droids, each with different and pretty weird characteristics. Droid one looks like a football with gnashing teeth bouncing slowly up and down on a spring. Droid two is a diving helmet without the diver and droid three is a frisbee with a pea shooter perched on top.

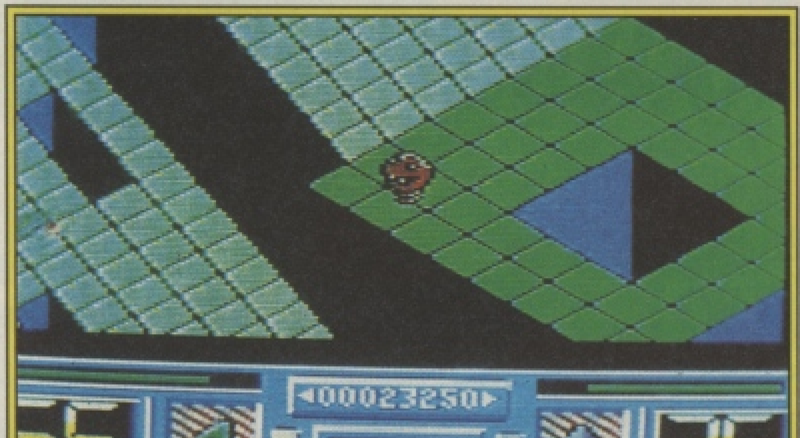


That's the exit, but you can't go down until the arrows flash.

In case you think this is all superfluous, it's because each droid is good at one particular thing. The blurb won't tell but I'll give you the benefit of extensive gameplay. The football with big gnashers doesn't slide helplessly down slopes, it sticks. And the frisbee isn't burned up by acid lakes. The other two droids must pick up a snowflake which freezes the lake before they can venture over it.

As you progress through the game you begin to become familiar with the different screens and you'll get an idea of which is the best droid to select. Generally, the outer screens are the steepest and most difficult, so save the gnashing football for those if you can.

Now for the nasties. Like *Gauntlet*, there are loads of meanie generators sprinkled around out of which meanies swarm all over the terrain. The meanies are just as



Droid number two does well on the slopes.



weird as the droids. Gnashing teeth (again), crab-like claws, four-legged starfish.

The meanies can't shoot you but you can shoot them. A better idea is to shoot the generators. These look like four strawberries bouncing up and down on a square and they can stand considerable zapping before they blow up. This may increase your score but will slow you down. Better still are the meanie-freeze devices scattered around. Bump into one of these and suddenly all goes quiet. The meanies just appear, leaving you with a well-earned breathing space.

More time can be gained by rolling over the various time capsules dotted around. But be careful, there are two types, spinning clockwise and anti-clockwise. Rolling over the clockwise spinning model gives you an extra five minutes. The anti-clockwise type reduces your time by the same amount. Falling off anything, by the way, also loses you a minute.

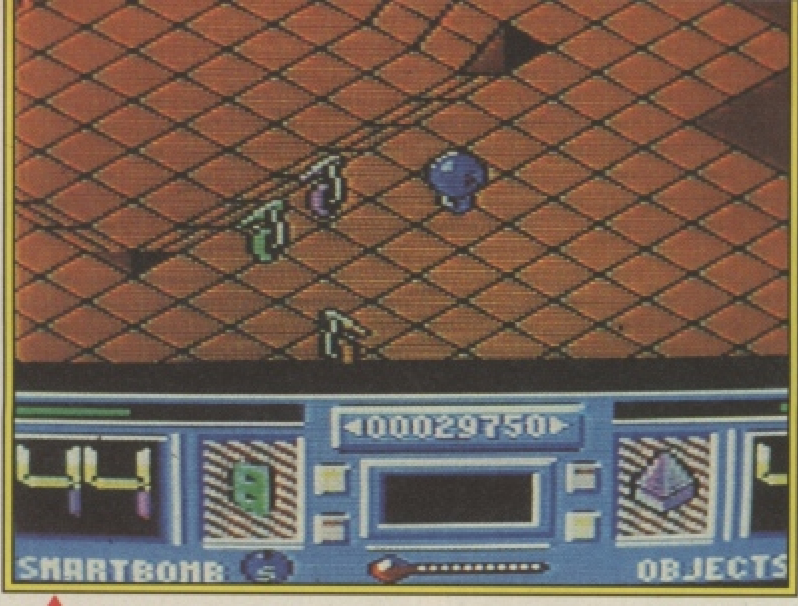
But scoring points can't be ignored either because every 10,000 one letter of the word BONUS appears somewhere on a level. Collect all five and you can replay the last landscape with complete immunity from getting zapped.

Finally, there are various smart bombs dotted around. These can't be stored up, but they will dispose of meanie generators. So the idea is to get one and make for the nearest set of jumping strawberries before pressing the firebutton to set it off.

Whilst all this is going on, you must keep an eye on your energy which goes up when you collect something but goes down whenever a meanie collides with you.

Apart from that, *Red L.E.D.* plays much like *Marble Madness* — similar yet more complex screen layouts, the same nasty inclines, slopes and narrow pathways and the same need for precise joystick control. If we hadn't seen it all before it would look pretty stunning.

So graphic are well up to standard. But sound is disappointing, not even a title tune.



Nasties come in all shapes and sizes.

One nice touch is the sound of running water that goes on in the background. I thought my telly was going up the creek until I found out it was the acid lake.

I reckon *Red L.E.D.* is a worthy addition to *Marble Madness* and its clones and is probably the most difficult and most challenging of its type. If you're still hooked on this kind of game, *Red L.E.D.* is a challenge not to be missed. If you're late into it forget the rest, just get this one.

Bohdan Buciak

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8 Overall

C.U. Screen Star



Another exit — but no flashing arrows.



You're just next to a transporter pad.



Pocket TV goes down the tube.

COMPO

You could easily lose your marbles playing the excellent Red L.E.D. from Reaktor — its so addictive. And just in case you do — Reaktor are offering CU readers a chance to win a pocket size TV so that you can go for a nice long walk and watch some soap operas at the same time in order to unwind.

Imagine being the envy of your friends tuning into your Sony Watchman as you wait for the school bus. Twenty five runners up can also win a copy of the Screen Star winning game — Red L.E.D.

Winning is easy — as always. All we want you to do is make us laugh.

We are looking for a good joke or cartoon funny about computer games to be published in next months CU.

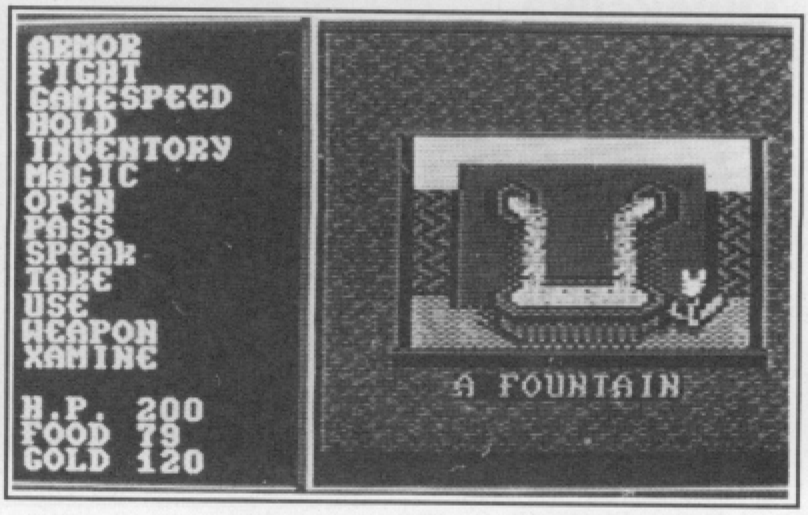
Don't feel restricted to the games themselves. You can make up jokes about boring programmers, reviewers, magazine editors, hilariously obscure widgets and sprockets or Nick Kelly's socks.

Send your entries to Belly Laugh Compo, Commodore Users, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU. Entries must reach us by October 26.

Win a Sony Watchman TV



▲ **Inside the Tarmalon museum**



▲ **The fountain could be worth examining**

Legacy of the Ancients

64/128
Electronic Arts
Price
£16.95 disk

As you would expect, with *Legacy of the Ancients* there is enough scene setting to make a short novel, but then the Ancients go back a long way. Their legacy is the Tarmalon Galactic Museum, built by the Ancients to 'act as windows revealing the history, legends and cultures of each host planet'.

How you came to be there might interest you. You are cast in the not terribly exciting role of a Tarmalon shepherd. You're a pretty boring sort of a bloke who has never been anywhere or done anything. Then, one day, you have the good fortune to stumble across a corpse — recently deceased. Being an honest sort of shepherd, you quickly divest the corpse of everthing bar its underwear. Your loot includes some papers, a gold bracelet, a strange black disc and a leather scroll.

A quick nose through the dead man's papers tells you what you need to know. The man was searching for, and had found the Wizard's Compendium, a Magical scroll full of evil power. The scroll had been stolen from the museum and the poor bloke was on his way to return it to the museum and discover a way to destroy it. Now that task falls to you. To help you in your quest you have the golden armband which sometimes does helpful things when you twist it, the disc of access which enables you to enter the museum and a coin or two.

As museums go, the Tarmalon museum is quiet an exciting place. Blazing torches light the long stone corridors. From the walls hang the display cases which house the exhibits, some of these are free, others require you to insert a jewelled coin before you get to see what the contain. The museum keepers are pretty cool about letting you keep whatever takes your fancy, so the exhibits are well worth looking at. It's also worth making a map of course.

Not all the action takes place inside the museum, in fact if you want to discover the secret of the scroll you will need to travel to the world outside. Tarmalon itself consists of twelve towns dotted amongst a landscape as varied as you could imagine — sea, swamps, mountains, fields, the lot.

Unlike the 3D scrolling maze of the Tamalon museum you are not treated to a birds eye view of yourself as you trot across the Tarmalon plains. Every now and then you are attacked by horrendous monsters. My advice is to run away, to stand and fight in the early stages of the game when you have few weapons and probably no magic is suicide. Your strength, measured in hi points will rapidly vanish and you will die. Once you are more experienced though, monster killing can be a lucrative excercise.

If you don't fancy the journey there is an easier way to get to a town than the conventional means of opening the museum door and legging it. The city of Thornberry is exhibited in one of the display cases. On viewing it you are asked if you would like to visit Thornberry, and the next thing you know you're there.

What do you do in town? Well the first thing you will need is money and, as you have little of value to sell the best way to go about getting it is gambling. Approaching and dealing with the townspeople is straightforward. All commands in the game are chosen from a menu on the left of the screen. To communicate you just choose speak. If you are in the right place the chap standing opposite you will respond ' would you like a game of blackjack' or 'want to try your luck at flip flop'. On the other hand he might salute you, or offer to buy or sell food, arms, or spells, a loan might be offered (extortionate interest rates) or you could have your fortune told. If any of these things happens it means you are not in the casino.

Obviously the idea is to accrue vast wealth by buying, selling gambling, robbing or whatever and use the money to increase your strength through good weapons, buy museum coins, periodically return to the museum and discover new things about the exhibits..

At some point in your travels the scroll will inevitably be stolen by bandits and you will have to retrieve it. In addition to the museum and the towns a lot of the action takes place in the dungeons and castles of Tarmalon. But before you travel to these you will need to do more than accumulate a little gold. You will need to be well armed with weapons and powerful spells.

The key to *Legacy's* success is that so much thought has gone into every part of the game. It's full of surprises. The whole thing works together really well. What I mean is, ordinarilly I would'nt be caught dead playing a crummy game like black jack or flip flop, it's about as intersting as noughts and crosses. But if winning or losing involves gold, and that gold could by you a much needed sword, or raft, or food. And if you don't win you'll have to steal, and fight some pretty mean guards to escape from town, well, it makes it a bit more interesting, know what I mean.

Ken McMahon

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8
Overall

64/128
Quicksilva
Price
£9.95 cass
£14.95 disk

These 'non games' are becoming very easy to spot — and very boring to play. The people who write the code are obviously no cretins, but they've a poor excuse for an imagination. Listen to this:-

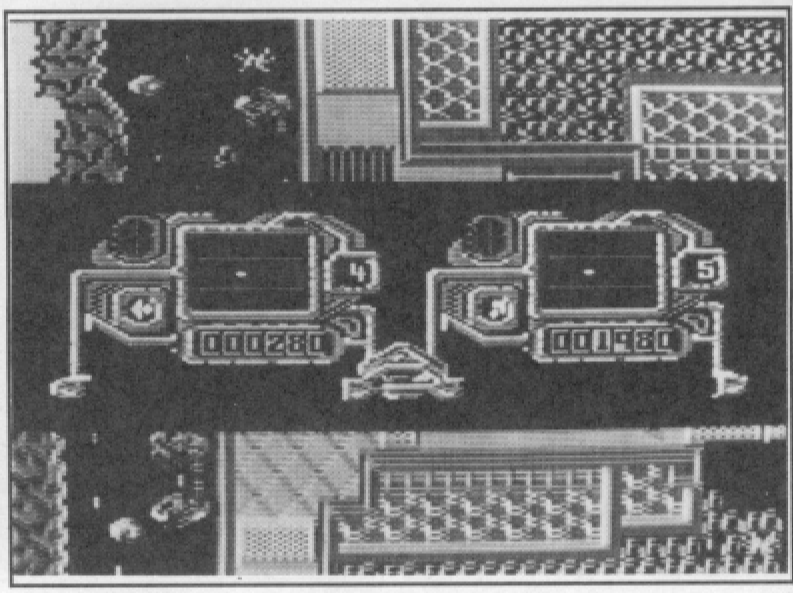
"Civilisation is trying to rebuild itself after world wide nuclear devastion . . . There has been a polarisation of the surviving cultures . . . two armed camps, the cabal of the cities aligned against a tribal federation of the mutants led by your father Hante. Unfortunately he has been captured . . . You, Sante, must release him if the federation is to hold its unity.

Nothing stunning there. Any one of half-a-dozen typical cassette inlays could fit this game because in reality it has very little to do with post nuclear holocaust cities, Hante, Sante, and mutants, and everything to do with 'you shoot them and they shoot you'

Mean City is really a two player game, although one player can compete with the computer that's obviously not how the game was meant to be played. The city is in fact a maze and, to give it its due, it is not a bad one. The action is viewed from above and although what you see below is represented two dimensionally the city is not all on one level and has raised walkways and platforms.

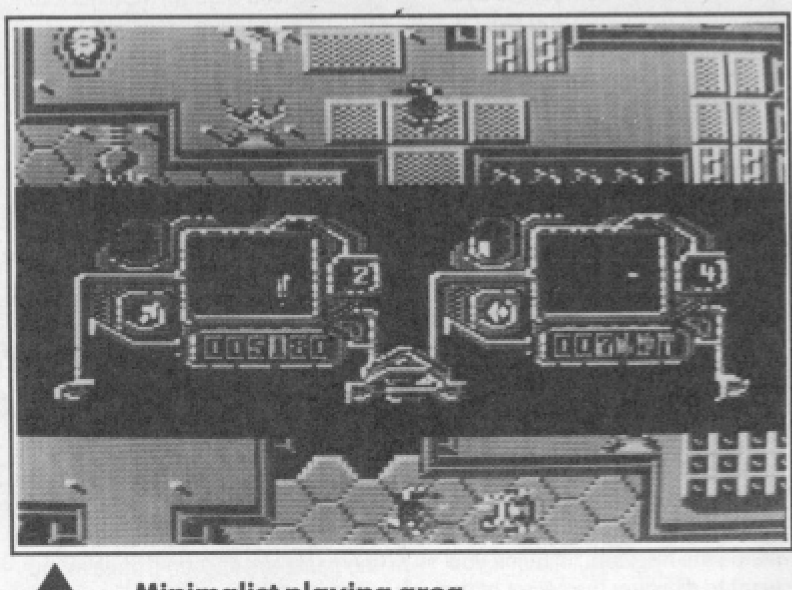
There's actually one really crucial aspect of the plot I left out. You have an evil cousin called Calte (not Fante, Wante or Bante?) who is also out to discover your old man's whereabouts so he can claim leadership of the federation, so you must get there before he does. The wicked cousin role is taken on by player two — none of your Gauntlet style cameraderie here, it's all out urban warfare.

Both you and the wicked cousin set out in hot pursuit of the old boy at the same time in the same maze. To begin with it's probably best to ignore each other — you'll have your hands full fighting off the city dwellers. Your only means of defence is a puny ping pong ball type cannon which is effective, but slow. Once you hit the 3000 mark you can rob assailants of their more powerful weapons. Your immediate objective, apart from staying alive, is to obtain four parts of the digital key which opens your old fella's cell.



Not a very mean game really.

MEAN CITY



Minimalist playing area.

The screen is divided in two so each of you in effect has an aerial window onto the section of the city through which you are travelling. The centre of the screen is occupied by the score display, an indicator which is supposed to give a clue as to the location of the nearest key section; but which proved in practice to be unreliable, and two huge oscilloscopes which seemed to serve no purpose whatsoever. The net result of all this clutter in the middle of the screen is that you get not a half, but one third of the screen through which to view the action. It's not enough, you can't see what's coming at you until it's on top of you, by which time it's too late.

And that's all there is to it. Blast the attackers, collect the key segments and try to hold on to them. If there were two of you playing I can see you might get more fun beating the living daylights out of each other, but as a solitary pastime *Mean City* is pretty poor entertainment

Ken McMahon.

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5
Overall

TUNN

64/128
Hewson
Price:
£2.99/cass

There I was thinking we'd had the last of the summer dross. Not quite, *Tunnel Vision* is one of those futuristic games we've all learned to leave well alone.

We're in the 22nd Century, two players in spaceships are locked in mortal combat electromagnetically suspended inside a holographically projected tunnel in outer space. Apart from the big words there's nothing to commend this scenario because the game itself looks nothing like it.

Anyway, the two spacepilots must compete to capture an orb that whizzes around the tunnel. Having got it, they score a point by carrying it to the goal. The opponent can take steps to grab the orb for himself and then go for touchdown. If they're playing games like this in the 22nd Century they've obviously forgotten how exciting blow football can be.

The game can be played either against a computer or another human opponent. The fun factor is slightly higher with another human since the computer always seems to win.

Other options include a one, three or five orb game. There are five different tunnels which can be chosen individually or in order of difficulty – difficulty here means the number of bends. There are also three skill levels to select. Then there's a tunnel editor to modify existing tunnels.

The screen is split in two horizontally, showing both players' view of the tunnel. At the left side is a map of the tunnel for each player, indicating his or her position and that of the orb. Simply whizz along until you get the orb within range. Pressing the fire button then releases a tractor beam that grabs the orb. Now go hell for leather for goal.

The opponent is obviously doing the same thing and can fire at you or bump you until your shields run out. So you must constantly be looking both at your own and your opponent's tunnel position. Both players can change direction and bank both left and right.

There's another craft that whizzes around the tunnel. This crashes into both players indiscriminately and

NEL VISION

will damage their shields. This can be zapped with your laser bolt. By the way, the laser bolt looks remarkably like the tractor beam.

To stop one player destroying another and then picking up the orb with ease, you can set an automatic timeout. This simply restarts the game whenever fuel or shields run out. Timeouts also stop stalemate situations but they can be used to advantage. Say you have no chance of stopping your orb-carrying opponent reaching the goal, simply scrape the walls, run your shields down and you both start again ha!

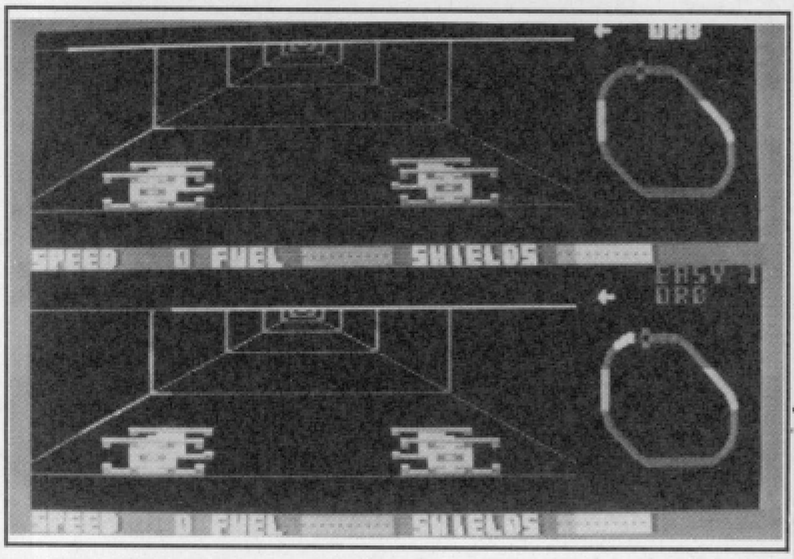
Now for the graphics. The holographic tunnels look like a Brixton subway. The spaceships look like two tangled up coathangers and the orb looks like a flashing orange fruit pastille. From this you'll gather that the graphics are a little meagre. Add to that an anaemic title screen and that much maligned Bach toccata as the title tune and you've got a lot to recover from.

Graphically more stunning is the tunnel editor. Here you get to alter the shape of any of the five tunnels by taking out pieces and replacing them with ones from a set of 18 provided. Some of the pieces are so small and so badly defined, they look like ink blots.

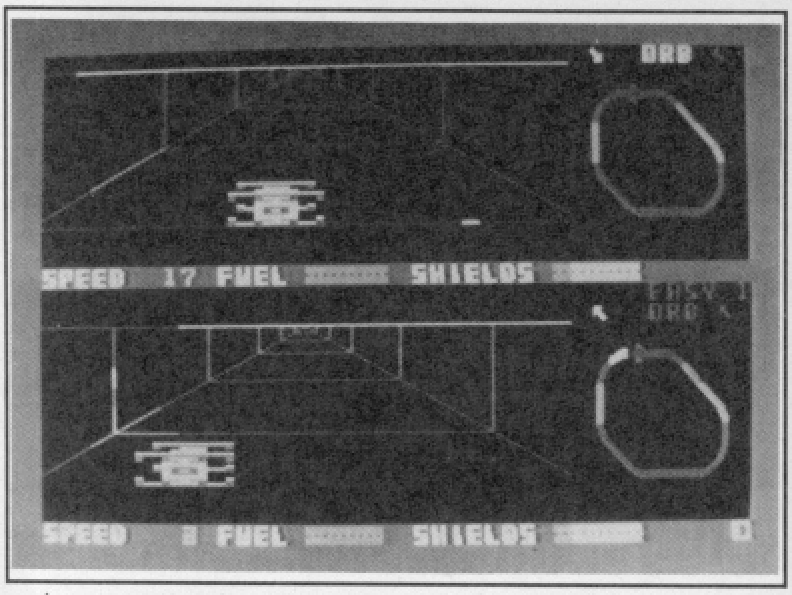
How does the game play? Well, it's really one of those road racing games dressed up. The spaceships handle the same way, accelerating and decelerating as you push the joystick forward and back. Granted there's a little more to the game tactically, but not much.

A few words of mitigation. The speech is probably the best I've heard. According to the blurb, certain meaningful phrases ("well done, player one") were recorded at 5.85 KHz. Blimey.

Bohdan Buciak



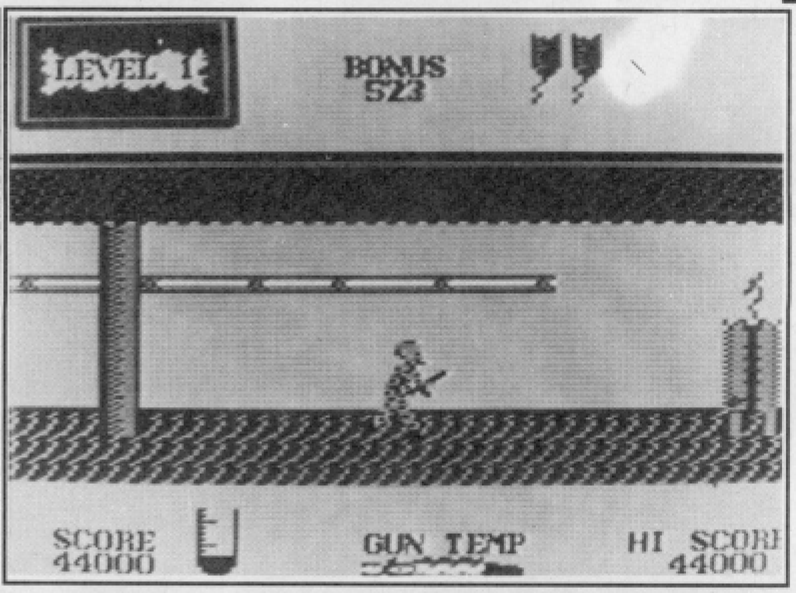
Shift that coat hanger.



Tunnel vision — tunnel imagination.

Graphics
Sound
Toughness
Endurance
Value

5 Overall



RAPID FIRE

Mastertronic 64/128 Price: £1.99

Since the Hungerford shootings it seems the government have been cracking down by censoring T.V., video, and just about every other medium around. Strange, then that so far they have left the area of game (computer and arcade) untouched. Do they believe that violence in games does not breed mentally deranged people or have they not yet begun work on our beloved software. The reason I lecture upon this, fellow gamers, is that this type of game will be the first to go, should the moral armageddon ever come.

You play an ace, undercover cop, who has been sent in by the force to do their dirty work. You must go in to an old derelict warehouse where a gang of super criminals are currently planning a large bank job, and shoot them out of sight.

The criminals are not too amused when you try to do this and so they decide to send a few henchmen down. If, and when, you kill these they won't be happy, so they decide to chuck a few boxes of grenades, and launch a few missiles at your Stallone-like carcass. Should you be a real Cobra and get past this little lot, a few roof snipers will really give you a hard time. All this boils down to us five levels of good, hard blasting.

You have five lives to last the level, and an extra life can be found on the third level. When you are hit by a grenade, missile etc. you don't immediately die, you lose an amount of blood, when your body loses too much blood you lose a life. Your amount of blood is shown in the form of a blood drip. Provided you don't get shot again your blood will slowly be reimbursed.

Another of the problems you will have to tackle is the gun overheating. Should you decide to go too mad with your trigger finger your gun will overheat and you will find yourself in a most unfortunate situation where you have nothing to defend yourself whatsoever.

Rapid Fire is not really an amazing game but it is a reasonably decent blast. The game could be rather easy to play because after just an hour's play Euge (fresh back from retaining his Irish Thai boxing title.), Mike, Nick, and I have absolutely demolished the first four levels and as I speak I think Madman Pattenden is currently putting his fearsome skills to the fifth and final level. Still if you fancy an hour ot two blasing, and you're not of a nervous disposition or prospective psychopathic maniac, this could be the game for you.

Ferdy Hamilton

Graphics
Sound
Toughness
Endurance
Value

6 Overall


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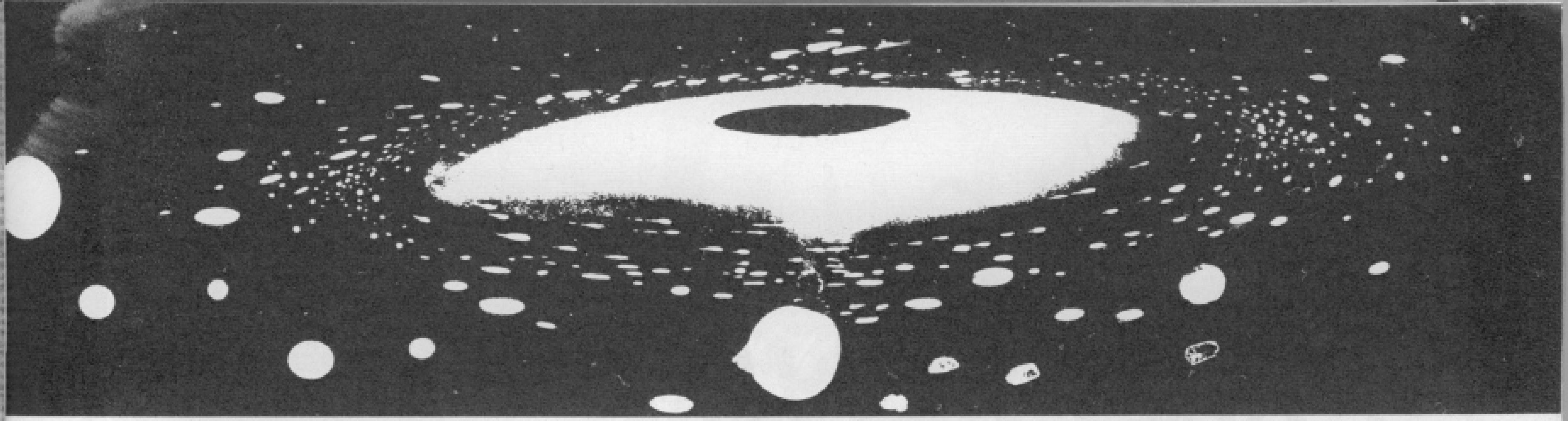
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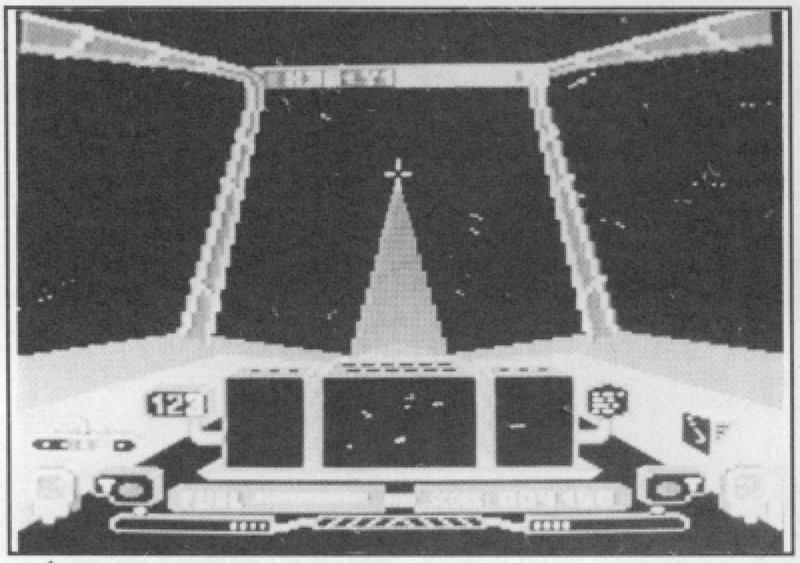
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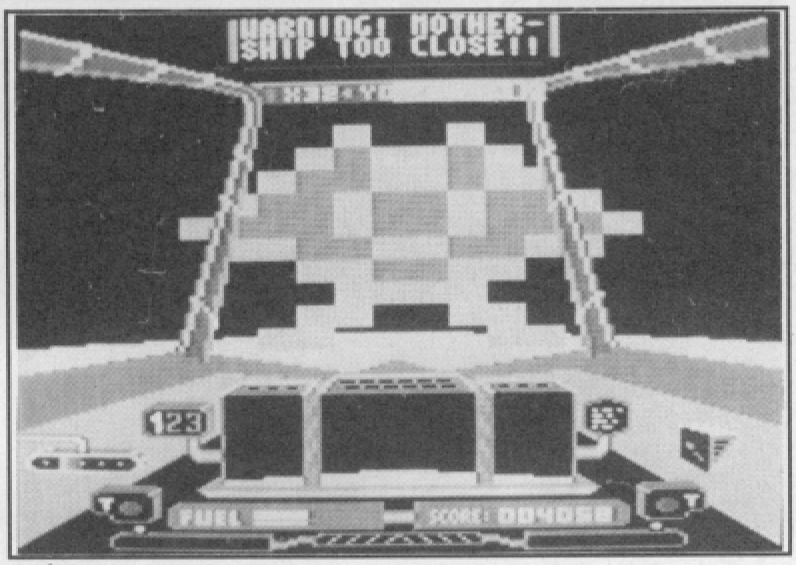

GFabry 87



ST★RFOX



Not one of the Fox line.



Vector graphics — good or bad.

Reaktor
64/128
Price: £9.95

I always take a very wary view when playing vector graphic space games. Some are cool like *Elite,* and *Mercenary,* but most are down right useless like *Starion,* or to name one of Reaktor's own miscarriges *Deathscape.*

Still better throw all prejudicies aside and get down to some unbiased prose. You play Hawkins who in short is tough, real tough. Hawkins is the pilot of *Starfox* and he must clear the eight planet universe, named the Rubicon of a ninth planet which has invaded security and is attacking everything in sight. Stop these creatures by completing eight gruelling tasks.

What this rather inane story comes down to is a vector shoot 'em up with smatterings of adventure and strategy mixed in. To start with you fly around the galaxy in search of a planet. Because only when you've found a planet can you begin to do some effective blasting, as the laser you are forced to strat with is well . . . rather pathetic. The trouble is that you find yourself flying around pointlessly for a while as you can not use the autopilot to get to a planet unless you've already visited there and how can you visit there if you can't use the autopilot. It is a kind of Catch 22 which does lead to frustration after a lot of searching, although there are hints on the instructions booklet (which frankly, didn't seem too effective for me.)

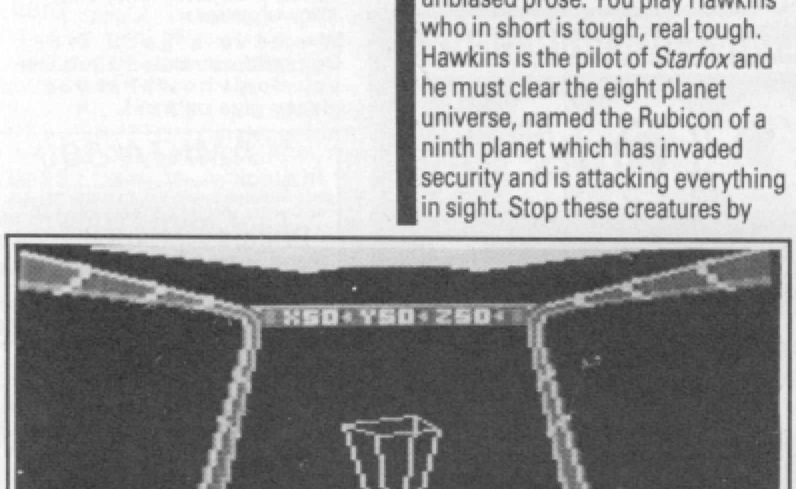
Task one of the eight gives you the object of killing an alloted amount of enemy. So to do this quickly the best thing to do is go to another planet and get yourself a decent laser and then proceed to blow away the aliens. The only trouble with this is the fact that you only seem to come across an alien convoy once every five minutes, and this is when you've got the enemy locating system on, so at the end of it all you seem to be doing is floating around wastefully until you find a planet, then once you have your new mega-blasting weapon you must then fly around for hours looking for someone to use it on.

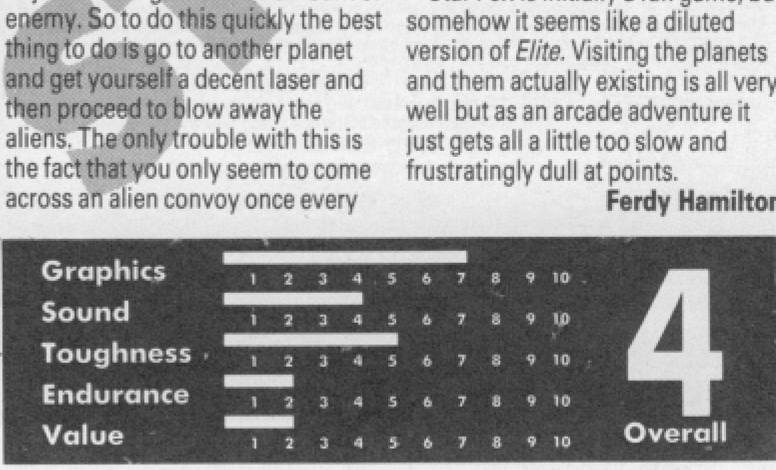
The other seven levels require a lot more knowledge of where the planets are as much to and froing between them must be done. When you are choosing which of the twenty three weapons don't necessarily choose the most powerful as on the next level the enemy craft will use it on you.

The game also contains other small features posing as interesting additives but a lot of the entertainment you get out of this game is really just surface deep.

Star Fox is initially a fun game, but somehow it seems like a diluted version of *Elite.* Visiting the planets and them actually existing is all very well but as an arcade adventure it just gets all a little too slow and frustratingly dull at points.

Ferdy Hamilton





4
Overall

Evesham Micros

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INSTALLATION

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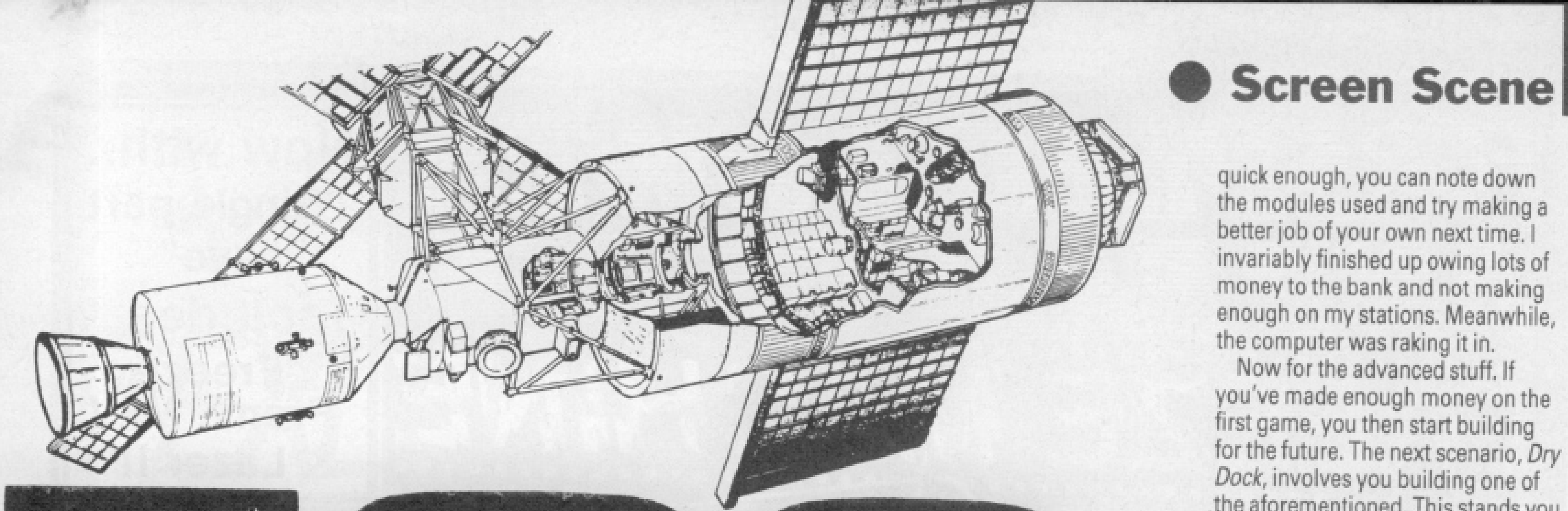
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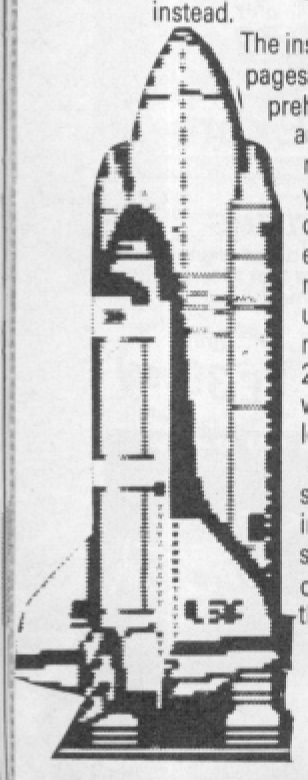


EOS

64/128
Electronic Arts
Price: £16.95/disk only

Now that the American space programme has ground to a halt, NASA boffins might try whiling away the years before the next blast-off by playing EOS. EOS stands for Earth Orbit Stations and it's a very big game indeed. If you've got plenty of time on your hands (like early retirement) and you enjoy wheeling and dealing, this is the game for you.

Just to prove how big it is, there are seven different games scenarios which interlink and gradually become more complex. The blurb tells us each game can take between two and 40 hours to complete. Take it steadily (why rush?) and you could be playing for up to 300 hours. Up to four players can take part. This could be difficult — try placing an ad with your local Job Centre. If there are no takers the computer will play instead.



The instruction book is 14 pages of total incomprehensibility, there are three disks and a mission disk which you must format and copy before starting every new game. So merely setting things up takes about 20 minutes. But what's 20 minutes when a whole lifetime of EOS looms?

EOS is a space strategy game that involves you building space stations for commercial gain. As the blurb drawls, "Profits are the mother's milk of the space industry". Having built your stations, you attach a variety of modules to them. These modules perform functions for which you can charge users. So you make lots of money and gain a higher Tech Level in order to build more specialised and advanced stations that lead to more difficult and lucrative game scenarios.

Space stations are built rather like putting together pieces of a jigsaw. Each module has one or more connecting points and you place them together on a large grid. This is not just a little interlude. Arrange your modules carelessly and you run out of connecting points and you'll waste money buying connections. Once placed, a module cannot be moved.

There are two types of module: research/commerce and support. Before any research/commerce modules can be attached to the station, the required number of support modules must be in place. You require command and logistics modules, sufficient power, life and GGym (food and exercise) for the research/commerce modules to become active. Error messages will appear if you try doing something that won't work.

There's a range of sixteen commercial functions, each with its own modules. They're all listed in terms of functions and activities, cost of operation and their operating requirements. Some modules don't become available until you've reached a higher tech level.

Apart from physical requirements, deciding which research/commerce modules to attach to your station involves analysing the 'market' for information on what activities are and aren't in demand. Modules are set to either commerce or research. Research involves greater financial gain but more risks.

Market information is always available, as are statistics on the performance of each of the functions, your own financial position and those of any other players. This is no doddle, it makes the FT read like the Beano.

As you'd expect, there's a bank involved. You can go to the bank for a loan, deposit any income you've made and pay off loans in order to start building more stations. When you get more used to playing (say, next year) there's potential to advertise your services, get a sponsor and wheel and deal with the other players.

EOS works by allowing each player one 'turn' of making money for each quarter-year of the game. The first game, *Research*, lasts two years so you each get eight turns. The instruction book gives a step-by-step guide to what a 'turn' consists of. Figures for each player can be gained after each quarter and at the end of the game. The player with the most money at the end wins.

If you're playing the computer, you get a fleeting glimpse of the type of station it's built. If you're quick enough, you can note down the modules used and try making a better job of your own next time. I invariably finished up owing lots of money to the bank and not making enough on my stations. Meanwhile, the computer was raking it in.

Now for the advanced stuff. If you've made enough money on the first game, you then start building for the future. The next scenario, *Dry Dock*, involves you building one of the aforementioned. This stands you in good stead for later games that involve building Cargoliners and Jupiter Explorers. Jupiter Explorers and probes are sent out to look at other planets in the Solar System.

More advanced scenarios include rescuing a space settlement on Mars, building a settlement on the moon and building a space colony to orbit the earth. This culminates in the final game, Search for Life, in which you have no less than ten years to probe for life in the Solar System and report discoveries.

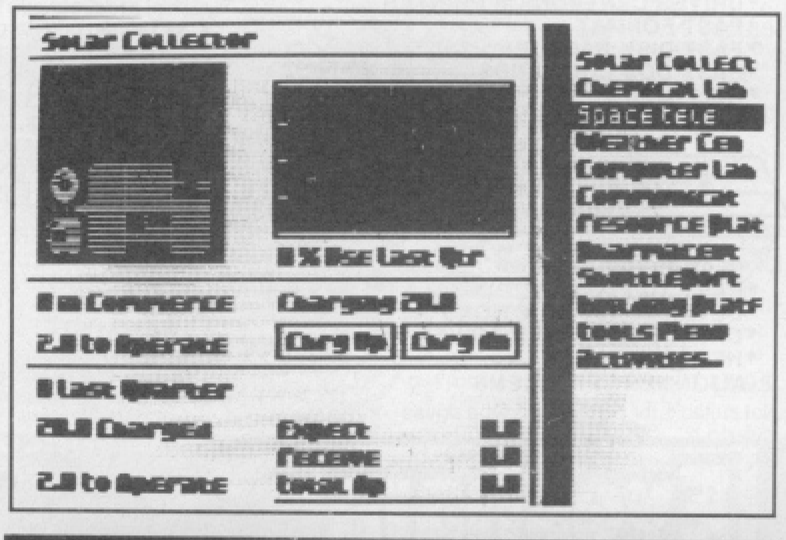
By the way, the blurb tells us *EOS* is a simulation based on NASA's plans for the next 50 years. So now you know, these guys really are fruitcakes.

I don't know what to make of *EOS*. The game is difficult to grasp, but then again it should be if it hopes to sustain so many hours of play. There is a confusingly large range of menus each holding reams of information. Again, this is necessary to give the game sufficient depth for sustained play. So there's lots of reading involved and legibility isn't helped by stupidly customised 'space type'.

EOS is impressive in its size and complexity but it will appeal only to those of you who like getting totally immersed in an idea and sticking with it for a long time. If you fit the bill, grab this game. If you're a joystick pusher who likes action and variety, stay well clear.

Bohdan Buciak

▼ ***EOS* — could take you a light year to play.**



Graphics
Sound
Toughness
Endurance
Value

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6
Overall


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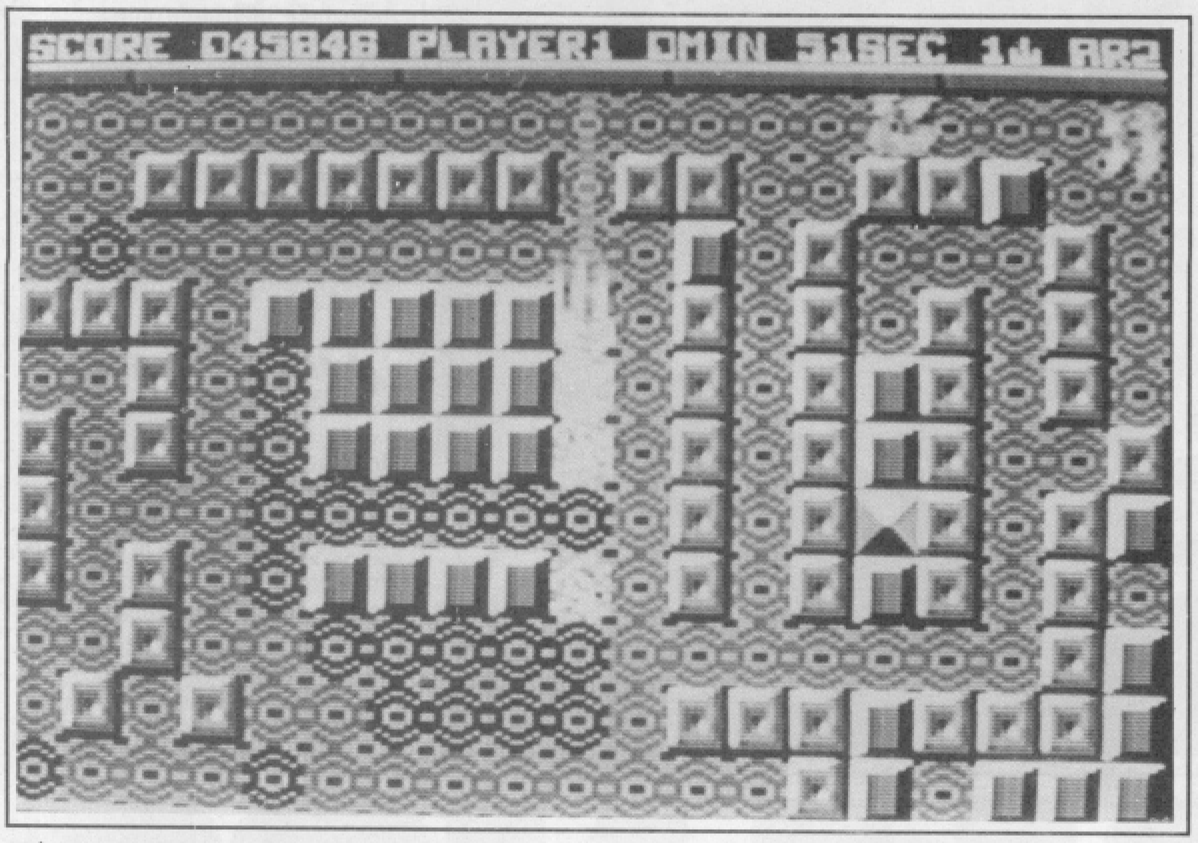
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Anarchy

64/128
Hewson
Price: £2.99/cass

Had I not stayed up last night playing this game, I'd have told you it was rubbish and not worth getting a sweaty palm for. But you should never dismiss Hewson as easily as that. *Anarchy* is manic blasting with depth, and it's addictive. What it isn't is anarchic – there are no petrol bombs and no Iranians.

Anarchy is probably one of the simplest games Hewson have produced; you could read the instructions about as quickly as the number on a bus. Forget the story about anarchic rebels taking over a planet, what you do is this. You move around in a maze of Hewson-like 3D squares blasting the ones that look like pieces of Yorkie bar, only they're red. By the way, there are two kinds of square to zap, the other one looks a Pyramint.

When you've got rid of them all, an exit flashes somewhere on the screen. Something else rather more disturbing happens too. The floor starts to move around which kind of throws you. It doesn't do your stomach any good either. Make it to the exit and you proceed to the next level and more of the same, albeit different colours and a more complex arrangement of squares.

Sounds pretty boring doesn't it?

OK, so there are a few nasties spinning around. You can't blast them, though. You merely turn them into temporary squares which you can push around. A few seconds later they're back as spinning nasties.

The real crux of the matter is that you can't blast a square unless you're at least one square's distance away from it. Squares are cunningly arranged in such a way that you have to devise a methodical system of blasting to get rid of them all. Since you have only two minutes per level, you can forget the idea of making notes.

When the last piece has been zapped, your fire-power is curiously disabled. This leaves you vulnerable to the spinning nasties who seem to know you've got your pants down because they gang up on you. So you must organise your blasting so that the last piece to go is as close as possible to the exit.

So that's what you do for the first four levels. Things change a little from fifth onwards because droids are introduced. Droids look remarkably like you. They follow you around and blasting merely holds them at bay for a second or too. These things are real mean. The only way forward is to dodge them. Later still, you're confronted by whole armies of droids and spinning things.

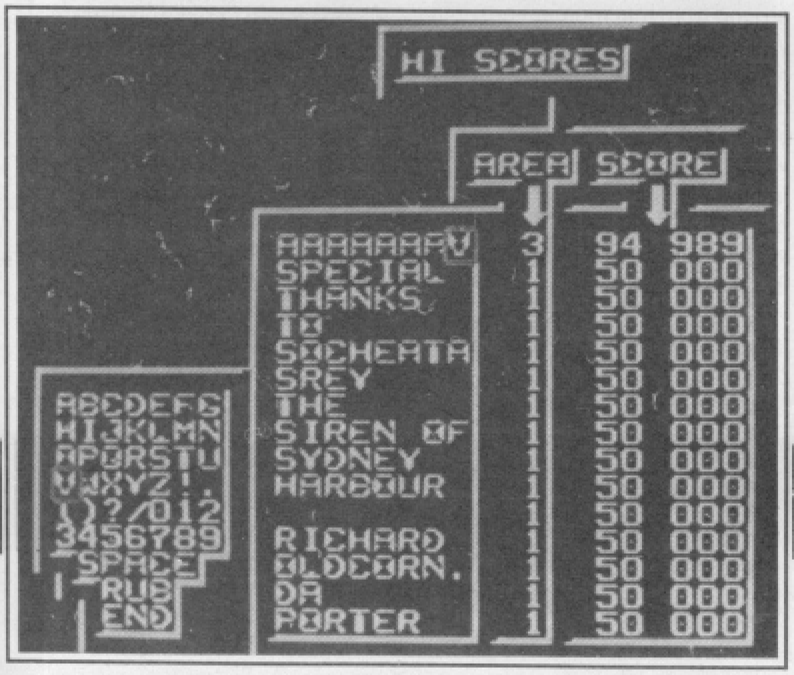
A few words about the sound. Apart from very impressive title music, Hewson have done away with boring old blasting noises. It all sounds rather like the music you get when Dr Who gets grabbed by the Cybernauts. The Pyramint squares make a sound like a motor scooter horn. Lots of manic blasting produces some really weird effects.

Lastly the graphics. These are up to Hewson standards but not as impressive as some of their earlier stuff. A little more effort could have gone into the nasties. Still, the explosion effect when you blast squares is pretty neat.

A little hint, let the title screen play a while and you'll see some sample screens. Watching carefully gives you some ideas on how to tackle the higher levels.

I enjoyed Anarchy. It's simple yet tricky and challenging. Maybe not destined to be a classic but great budget value all the same.

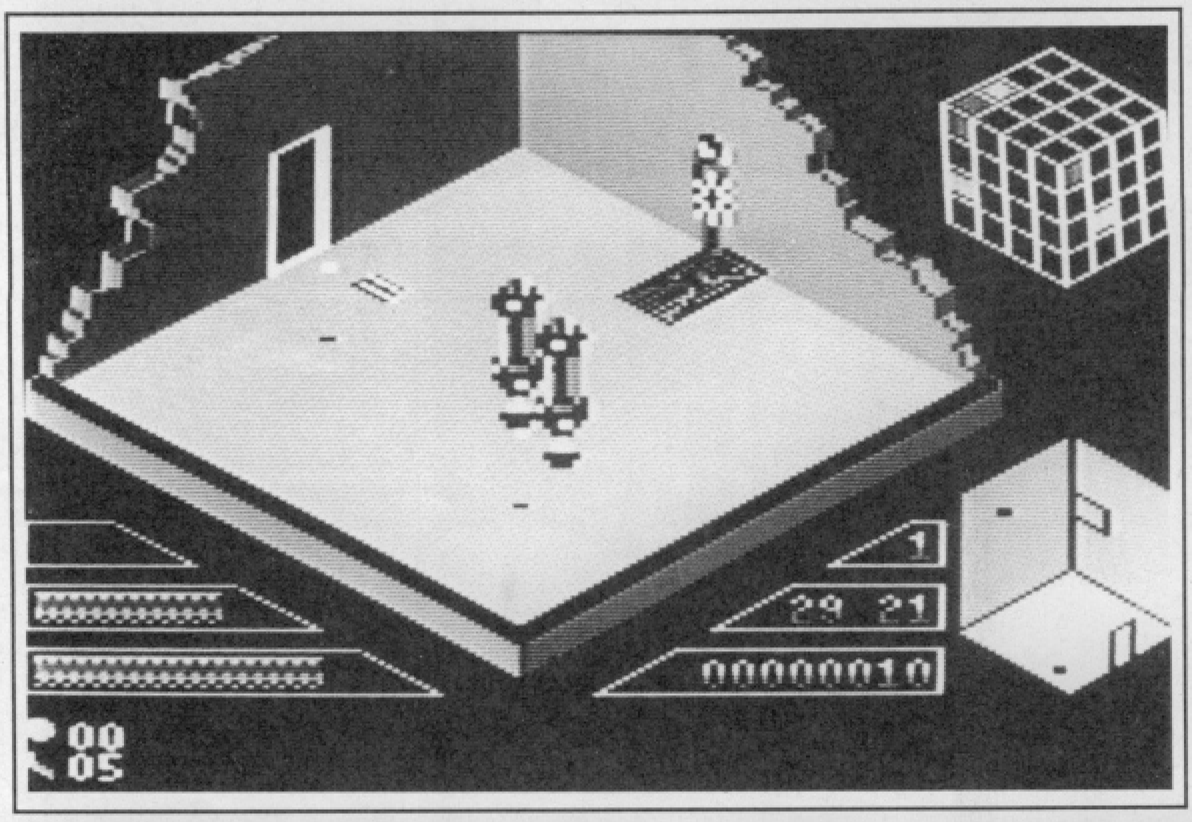
Bohdan Buciak



Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8
Overall

CHEAPO of the month



◀ **Falling more than two floors is fatal.**

TRIAXOS

64/128
Ariolasoft
Price: £12.95/disk £9.99/cass

You've got to hand it to Ariolasoft — they really know how to make strange games. Look at their track record: *Mail Order Monsters, Archon, Racing Destruction Set, Scarabaeus* etc etc. It should come as no surprise, then, to learn that *Triaxos* is the usual Ariolasoft mix of original ideas and peculiar gameplay.

The storyline goes something like this: "deep in space floats a high security prison containing the only man capable of activating the msot powerful weapon in the galaxy. Your mission Jim, should you decide to accept it, is to rescue this man and return him to your ship in only 30 minutes. Good luck. This hype will self-destruct in five seconds." Oh, and just to add to the amusements, a mind-probe lands on the prison ten minutes after you, with the sole intention of zapping the prisoner's brains.

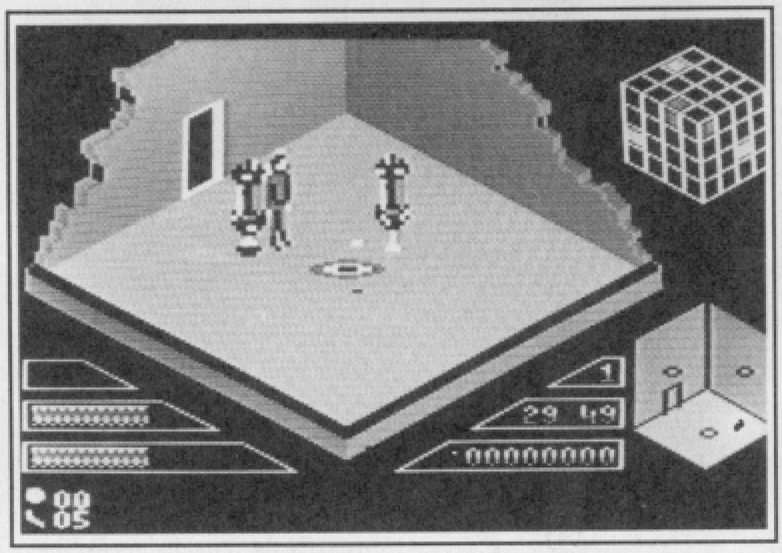
The prison is a 64 room cube, 4 × 4 × 4, guarded by the usual psychopathic robots armed with lasers (who gives killer robots their weapons in all these games? — whoever he is, he should be tracked down and locked up for a very long time.) Your hero is armed with a laser, which has limited energy, and some explosives. He can take a fair old bit of damage and seems to heal himself slowly but surely.

Now to the actual game — you run round the prison killing robots, looking for the prisoner, and generally trying to stay alive. If you find the prisoner he then follows you around from that moment on, until you make your escape. So far, so normal; the clever bit comes with devices called Face-Lifts: these shift you from wall to wall, making what was the floor into a wall, and a door into a hole in the floor. (In fact you can only stand on three different walls, as the view of each room is 3-D cutaway).

At this point the explosives come into their own. The trick is to place them on the floor where you think there may be a covered hole (there are a lot of these), hopefully blow a hole there, then jump onto a different wall so that the hole is now a door, which you can walk through. If you so wish you can risk jumping through the hole, but if you fall through two holes, one underneath the other, you will die. Note here that you only have one life.

All this cavorting around with holes and explosives may lead you to forget your mission, but there are other important objectives too, such as collecting the four parts of the probe laser, a weapon to destroy the mindprobe, and a Jet-Pack needed to get you and the prisoner back to your ship.

You can also make a clone of yourself at the clone-booth, or get your gun recharged at an energy tower while you're thinking about all this.



▲ **Use the face-lifts to flick from wall to wall.**

It may have occurred to your that given that this is only a half-hour game (the time limit runs in real-time) and that there are only 64 rooms, it must be (a) quite small, and (b) fairly easy. Neither assumption is true. The game is in fact very large, as each room can be viewed in three different perspectives, and is very taxing on the cerebral matter (brain to you) as tactical placing of holes, and the progress through them, becomes very important the further into the game you get.

Having credited the game thus far, it must be said that it has a few foibles: its graphics consist of big, blocky sprites with not-so-good animation, boring room graphics and little that's actually exciting. The joystick control is slightly awkward, reminiscent of the early Hexpert conversions in its original diagonal style (i.e. up moves your character diagonally left and up the screen), and the sound is nothing to write home about.

These criticisms show what a strange little game this is, being the complete opposite of most new releases: plenty of originality, but very few flash effects — just pure game. Slightly overpriced I feel.

Daniel Gilbert

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6 Overall

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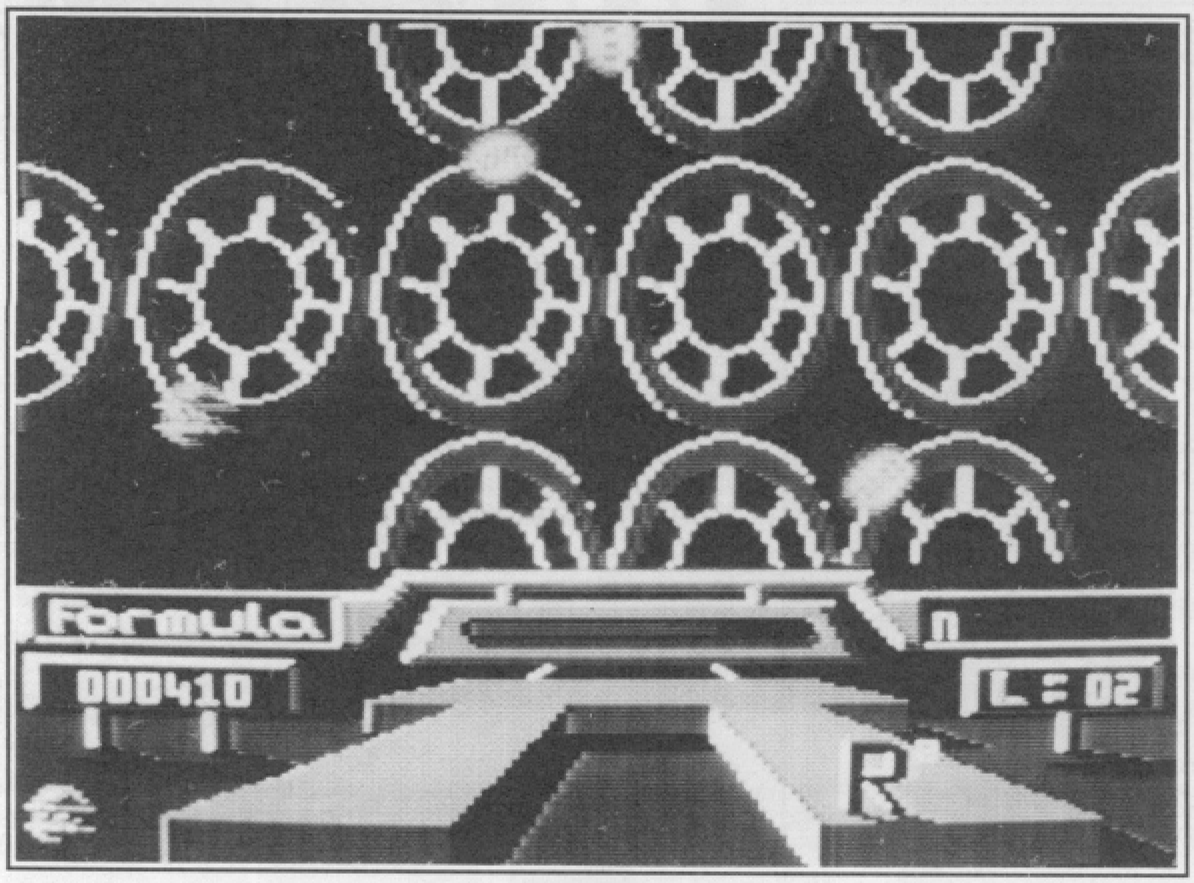
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Devising a game about maths formulas will go down as one of the great ideas of 1987. Rumour has it the same programer is working on a multi-level French verb conjugations blaster. Next year could see a fast-scrolling Capital Cities of the World and Their Population game.

πr^2 (or Pyearsquared for those of you who like things spelled out) doesn't need a joystick. Yes, it can be keyboard-only controlled.

Since maths formulas involve brainy people, we're supplied with a very brainy person in the shape of Professor Brian Storm. The prof is about to appear on the telly to lecture on something very brainy. Like most professors in Carry On films, he's absent-minded and he's managed to forget his maths formulas. So he must get inside his brain, locate the bits of formula and put them back together again.

As usual, the game is nothing like the story. What's actually served up is a succession of levels, each consisting of a series of cartwheels, some spinning clockwise and others anticlockwise. At the beginning of each level, a simple formula is flashed onto the screen and then removed. The components of that formula are to be found at the centre of some of the wheels. You must remember the formula and pick up the bits in the correct order to go on to the next level and another formula.

To make things difficult for you, Stray Thoughts also circle the wheels and will drain you of IQ if you bump into them. To help you, various objects can be picked up. A book increases your IQ, a hammer lets you zap the Stray Thoughts, and so on.

◀ A screen from πr^2 or a rinse-spin cycle down the laundrette? Either way Mindgames won't clean up with this one.

The array of wheels is larger than the screen, so it scrolls in all four directions. This means you don't see where your formula components are located until you start moving around. You really have to plan a route that will get you to all the components and safely back to the start point.

At the bottom of the screen, you get a display of IQ left, lives left (you have only three) and how much of the formula you've picked up.

I have a few gripes; this is one of those games that's fun for a few hours but then starts getting on your nerves. The reason is that there's nothing much to it. Complete one level and the next one looks pretty much the same, and so does the next one.

The only real change is the arrangement of spinning wheels and the formula itself. So there wasn't much brains used on the programming side and even less brains involved in playing.

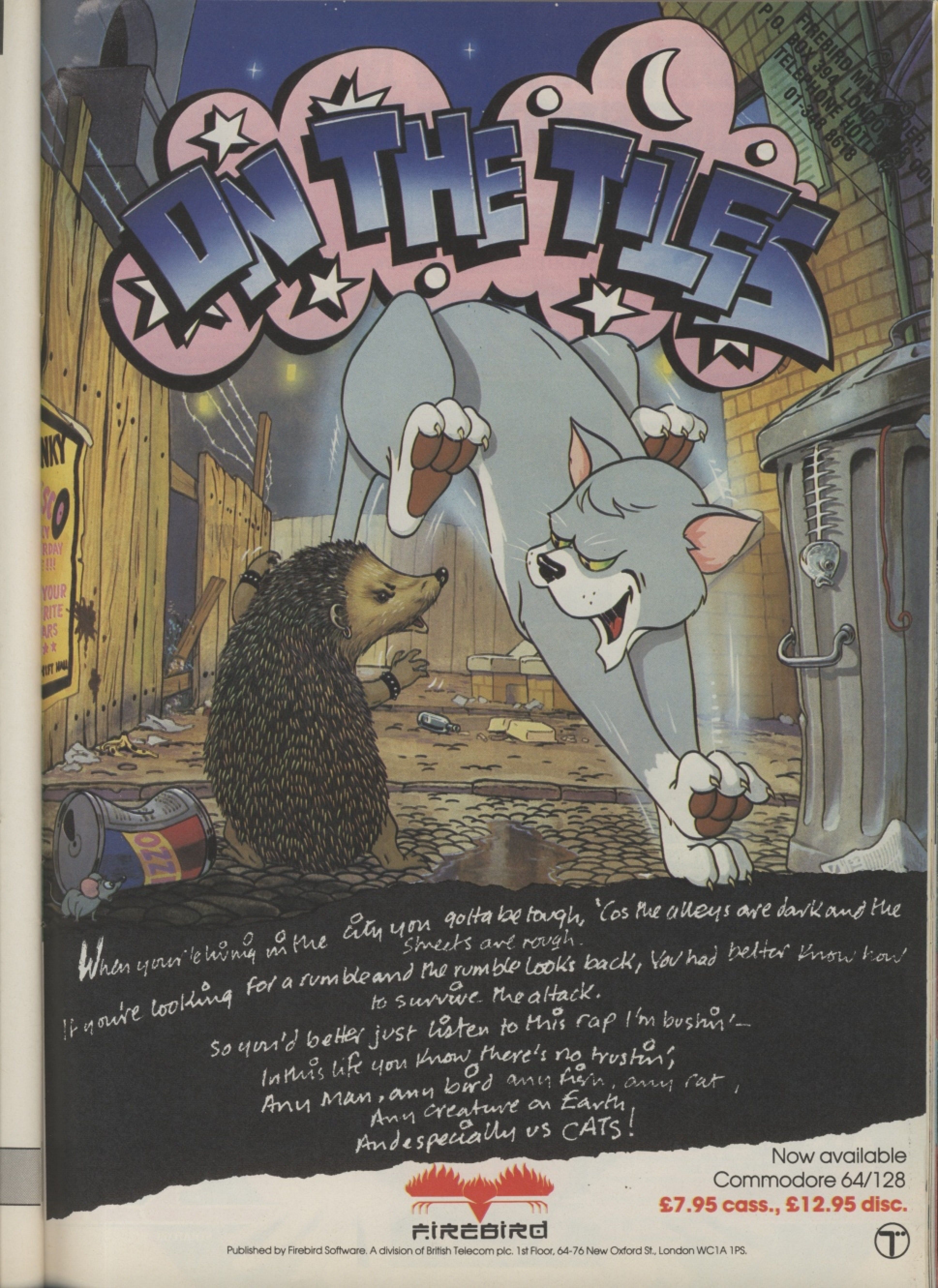
Most maddening are the three lives. Use them up and you simply go back to the start. This means you play the first few levels over and over again just to reach one higher level which looks pretty much the same as the rest. The tune is also one of those that makes you reach for the meat cleaver.

There's nothing random about levels either, they always play exactly the same way. In any case, spending a few hours in front of loads of spinning circles is about as exciting as watching your undies go round and round in the launderette.

Bohdan Buciak

Graphics 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5 Overall


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Q BALL

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Now, now, come, come. Would we, the upper crust of game connoisseurs, in our exclusive Amiga column (which is harder to get into than the Limelight night club!) review a lousy boring snooker variant? No, of course we wouldn't. *Q-Ball* is, I agree, a very snookery sounding game, but really 'anti-grav martian pool' would be of a more apt title.

Imagine a cube from the inside. Now, imagine some destructive so and so cut out all the eight corners, and took away the gravity. Good, now lob six red, one yellow and one black snooker ball into the box and call it *Q Ball*. Actually don't bother doing all that, just buy the game, it is probably a lot easier!

The object of the game is to pot all six red balls, and then the yellow. Without potting the cue (or Q) ball which is the black one.

Playing the game is done with a mouse and the keyboard but don't worry, you don't have to be amazingly dextrous, as this is more a game of concentration and good judgment than fast reactions and blisters on your trigger finger.

The way in which you hit the ball depends mainly upon the 'ghost ball' which is a flashing version of your cue ball. The object is to put the ghost ball on the exact spot you would like the cue ball to make contact with the red, or yellow. If that sounds confusing, imagine you are playing pool or snooker. You line up your eye and cue with the spot on the ball which you intend to hit. This in *Q Ball* is where you would put the ghost ball.

There are also other changes you can make to your shot. Some of these are obvious such as power, and spin, but because the ball is played in a cube you also have the option of slowing down of speeding up the friction. This in normal terms means that you can if you wish set if you wish the balls to stop quickly, or to take a long time to s..l..o..w.

You can play either one or two players. When you play on your own as I did the primary goal it to clear the board (pot all balls in order) with the highest score possible. The difference in score is linked to how many reds you pot, and who pots the yellow. For each of the reds that you pot, you score ten times what the timer (seen above the playfield) reads, plus a 500 points bonus. For potting the yellow you are awarded the same as for a red but you are given a 2000 points bonus instead of 500.

The beauty of *Q Ball* is the realism of the ball's animation and its realistic movement. Wherever you place the ghost ball the balls seem to move in a correct manner which is a rare thing for this type of simulation.

It also has an extra dimension to all other games of this type. You can knock the balls not only left and right, but also up and down as well. When you line up a shot so the red floats tantalisingly above one of the bottom pockets and the cue ball is near the top on the other side, a great surge of achievement is felt when you line up the ghost ball so it clips the top of the red, and then . . . click, a sweet little pot, and, yes, you're oh so beautifully line up for the yellow.

You can also rotate the cube left, or right, and even upside down. This is done using the cursors, and helps see which shots are on, and gives you a feeling of perspective.

How good can sound on a game like this be? You sarcastically snipe. Well, sucks to you. The sound is brilliant. Digitised snooker ball type-effects with great ragtime jingles.

Q Ball, there is no denying, takes much of its inspirations and ideas from snooker, but mixes them with its own zany ideas, and produces a wacky, fun and original game. So if you own an Amiga and regard yourself as a very warped and zany Guy/Gal, why not take pot luck (ugh!-Ed.) and go for this. In fact, I advise all game starved Amiga owners to buy this.

Ferdy Hamilton



▼ **3-D snooker — weird!**





▲ **Yellow in top lefthand pocket anyone?**

C.U. Screen Star

Rating	Score (1–10)
Graphics	8
Sound	8
Toughness	8
Endurance	8
Value	8

8 Overall


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Last Mission is one of US Gold's coin-op Classics, though I must admit to never having set eyes on the arcade version. It's a scrolling shoot 'em up in the classic tradition, nothing new or trendy about it, just good old *fahsioned blasing.*

You are an outcast. Restore your honour. Invade the hostile forces who torment your people. Your quest for honour is your last mission.' That's what I like to see, short and to the point. None of this poncing around about kidnapped princesses and evil overlords, just kill the suckers.

Actually, there's a litile more to it than that. First of all this big splodge which looks like one of those closed circuit cameras you get in Woolworths glides across the screen from bottom right to top left breathing great plumes of fire from four holes in it's side, though why this happens is anyone's guess. But it does give me the chance to tell you that you view the Woolies fire-breathing camera from above, and below it the planet surface scrolls in any one of eight directions (that's up, down, left, right and the ones in between).

On the planet surface there are several different kinds of object that you will have to look out for. First there are buildings which as a matter of act you won't have to look out for at all as they don't really do very much and will only district you. Next, tanks. Tanks aren't very mobile, they just sit their turning round and round and firing their guns, but are nonetheless dangerous as you will discover soon. Round things: In real life they're probably called multi gyratory oscillo-transponder things, but without the instruction book it's hard to say. Crab shaped thing: Again, they probably have some dead impressive pseudo scientific extra terrestrial name. Like the round thing they don't do anything unless you shoot them or bash into them.

When the Woolworths thing disappears of the screen, your ship appears. It's fairly small, but in all other respects looks much as you'd expect an interglatic space fighter to appear — gull wings, streamlined, bristling with weaponry. A quick burst on the joystick fire button confirms your impressions about its fire power as several blips emerge from the speaker and a corresponding number of short black dashes emerge from the ships nose. This craft had hidden reserves, but before you can begin to plumb their depths the aliens appear.

Creeping in from the edge of the screen they approach in an erratic weaving fashion threatening a collision with every unpredicatble move. A bit of practice with the controls would be helpful. The direction controls sound simple, but take some getting used to; Forward on the joystick sends you up the screen, downward back, and so on (in reality the ship stays where it is and the screen scrolls in the opposite direction the joystick movement).

The only thing to do is kill the lot of them but before you do that it's worth shoting at some round things, tanks or crab shaped things. It takes several shots to destroy them, but there are two good reason for doing this. The first is that if you collide with them you'll blow up. The second is they can provide you with a selection of weapons to use against the invaders. Most important of all, on destruction some crab shaped things provide yo with a force field which makes you totally invincible to alien attack and collision. Without the force field you can expect to last about two seconds.

The alternative weapons vary in power. They are all more effective than the cannon, but the most brilliant of all is the one called 'Hyper' on the instrument panel. Hyper send super destructive bolts radiating out in all directions from your ship. If you are clever about destroying the round things and crab shaped things you can ration your force fields.



The objective is to wipe out all the aliens, you can check your progress by the alien meter on the instument panel. Once this accommplished the Woolworths video camera returns and you just have to keep blasting with whatever weapons you have handy until it's destroyed. This is trickier than it sounds because the thing moves as erratically as its alien friends and if it bumps you without your force field on you've had it.

Once past the Winfield wonder it's on to level two and more of the same only more difficult. Last mission isn't anything outstanding or original, but what it does it does well. The sound and graphics are set up to mark and the gameplay is fine it's OK. I'm not sure if I'd shove 10p pieces into it for an afternoon though.

Ken McMahon.

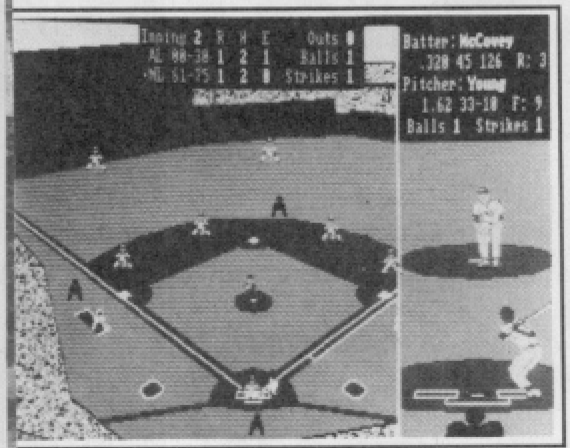
Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7
Overall

Baseball Head t

Due to the dearth of football games for the Amiga this month we bring you the playoff between two top baseball games. Francis Jago takes strike. . . .

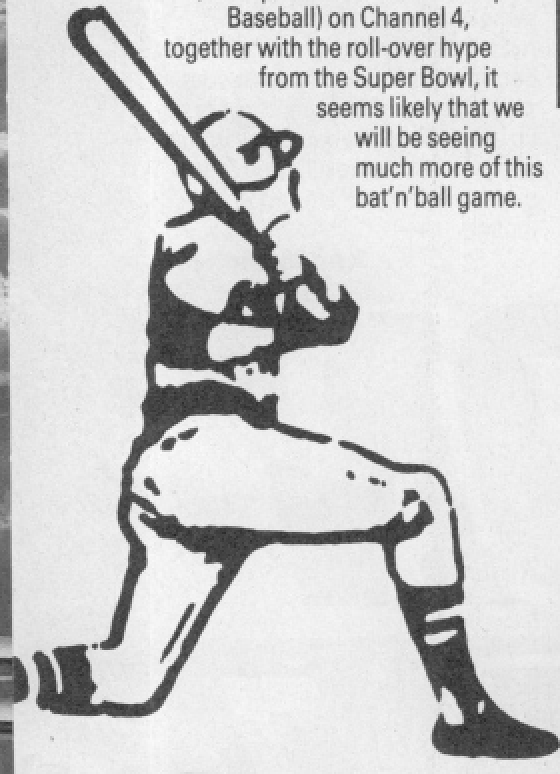
64/128
Hardball vs Earl Weaver
Price: £24.99



◀ **Earl Weaver's pitch lay-out.**

With the notable exception of American Football, few sports originated in the U.S. have ever really taken off in a big way over here in good old Blighty. Basketball may get a few minutes on Channel 4, but then so does everything from tortoise racing to hedge-hog splatting! The only sport that might possibly become as popular as American Football with the British is baseball.

With the back-up of complete coverage of this year's World Series (the equivalent of the F.A. Cup of Baseball) on Channel 4, together with the roll-over hype from the Super Bowl, it seems likely that we will be seeing much more of this bat'n'ball game.



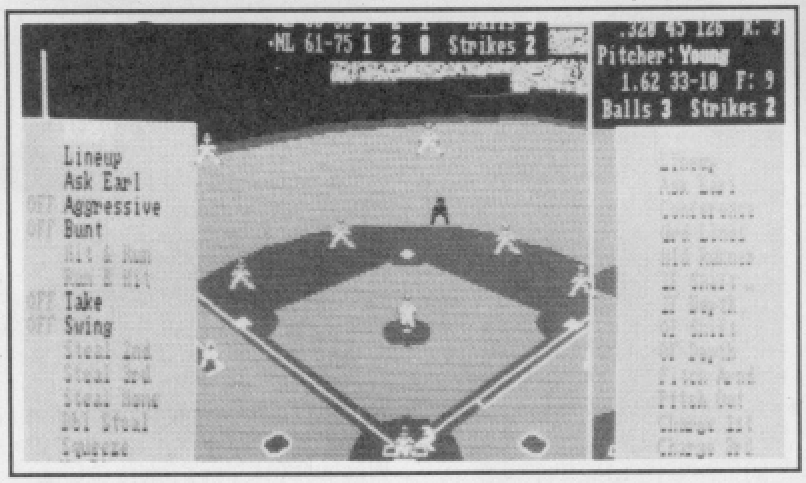
For this reason, the launch of two new baseball games for the Amiga should be of great interest for those gamesters who feel this cross between rounders and cricket is for them.

Although technically a comparison, it took only a few minutes for it to become clear that, apart from sharing baseball as the common denominator, *Hardball* and *Earl Weaver* are completely different and therefore not comparable.

Until recently I thought baseball was a pretty boring game. It seemed to be little more than a glorified version of rounders except that it is played by men wearing silly suits. About two months ago, however, I was forced – against my will I can assure you – to go to Hyde Park and take part in a 'friendly' game of baseball.

As I woke up the next morning bruised, battered and generally feeling pretty awful, I realised that perhaps baseball is not so weedy. It is this side of baseball that *Hardball* concentrates on. Much more of an arcade game than a simulation, it takes the exciting sections of a game and compacts it into a few nail-biting seconds.

Having played the 64 version, I took the easy route into the game and started playing immediately. Wow! The graphics and animation were always good, but on the Amiga they are incredible. In play there are three separate screens, two action, and one for managerial type decisions.

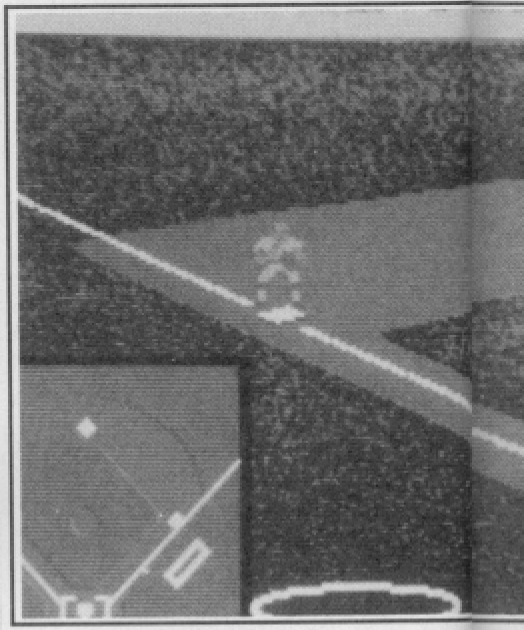


▲ **Options include a tactical chat with Earl himself.**

The first of the action screens shows a view from behind the pitcher showing the pitcher on his mound, the batter (that's what they're called), and the catcher. The decisions open to you depend mainly on whether your side is batting or fielding.

If you are batting, then you must try and anticipate the pitch you will receive, and then time your swing perfectly. In play this turned out to be difficult, but by no means impossible, and soon I was keeping up with the computer, and even smashing the odd homer. When pitching, you must decide both what type of pitch (slider, fastball, curve, off speed or change- up), and where to pitch it. Too many clever pitches and the batsman will get a free walk to first base, too few and you'll be hit all over the ground. After a few innings, it is possible to spot the good and bad batters, and take action accordingly.

If either you, or the opposition, manage to hit a ball, then the screen flicks to a new display that shows the whole diamond (playing area). As the ball whizzes along, you either watch or control little men who scurry around the field trying to catch or field it. If you are fielding, you must attempt either to catch the ball, or to field it as quickly as



HARDBALL

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6 Overall

to head

possible and throw it to a base towards which one of the opposition is sprinting, and if you are batting, you must get to base prior to the ball.

Throughout the game, *Hardball* feels like an arcade game that has had strategy added for effect. Dedicated baseball fans will be able to use the managerial screens to good effect – substituting players and swapping field positions about, but I have to confess that for me, my ignorance of all the technicalities of this particular game only added to my enjoyment.

As well as excellent graphics, *Hardball* has some interesting sound effects. The game starts with a painful loading screen that makes the likes of Spagna sound musical, and carries on in this vein with some very odd sampled sounds (most of which sound like people being tortured!).

Electronic Arts' baseball game is a different catcher's mitt altogether. As with many of their games, they rely on having a famous sporting hero as the ghosted author to add to the sales potential of the game – although I for one have never heard of Earl Weaver.

Going from Hardball to this you really would not believe it was the same game. Earl Weaver baseball is slow, complicated, and requries a great deal of practice. But in the end it can be very rewarding.

Apart from giving comprehensive instructions, the manual gives a potted life history of Earl; he was a third grade baseball player who became a quite successful manager. He was not, as the manual would have you believe, a god!

After a few hours studying the instructions it becomes very apparent that this game is a great deal more complicated than it at first seems, and that explains why it took me three innings to realise that I had been playing against a non-existent player!

As well as selecting your team, and positioning them on the diamond, you can design a ball park, check the pitcher's speed, replay any play in slow motion, and ask Earl Weaver's advice on any play. To describe this game as comprehensive would be an understatement. Added to these special effects are most of the features of Hardball, together with important improvements, such as the ability to retreat if you are going for a base (something I found useful on more than one occasion!).

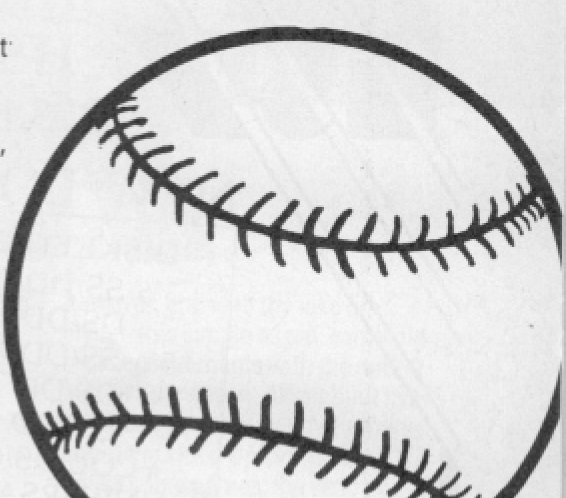
The graphics on this game are not as good as Hardball; the men are not as well illustrated, and the animation is, although very smooth, not quite as well executed. The sound, however, is noticeably better. Sampled throughout, the game makes good use of the Amiga's speech facilities, as well as some excellently sampled phrases; such as "yoourre OUT!!!" if you fail to make a base or "STTRRIKKEE!!" should you fail to hit one of the demon computer pitches.

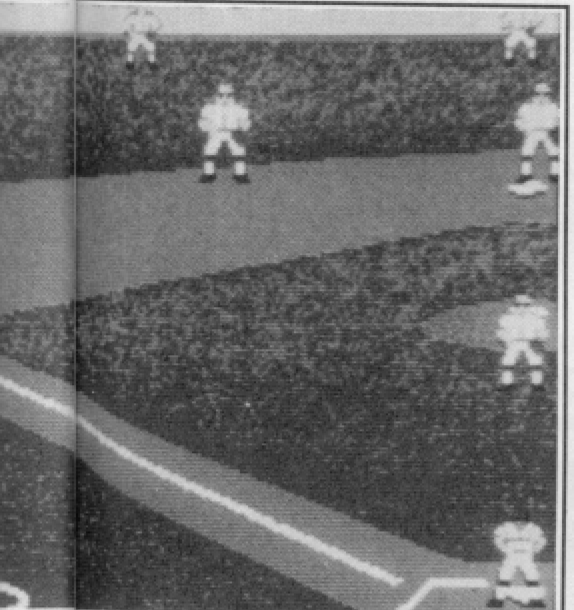
Although both these games are very different in their approaches to computerising baseball, they do share a certain amount of basic features. Both of these games are one or two player and, to be honest, both are pretty meaningless unless you have, or wish to have, some knowledge of baseball. Fans of sports simulations will find there is a great deal within both games, although strategists will certainly find Earl Weaver more to their liking.

Both games use the Amiga's features well, it is only a pity that they could not combine *Hardball's* graphics with *Earl Weaver's* sound, then you really would have had a great game! As with most good Amiga games, both of these are priced at just under £25, much too much, but it seems to be the figure on which everyone has agreed.

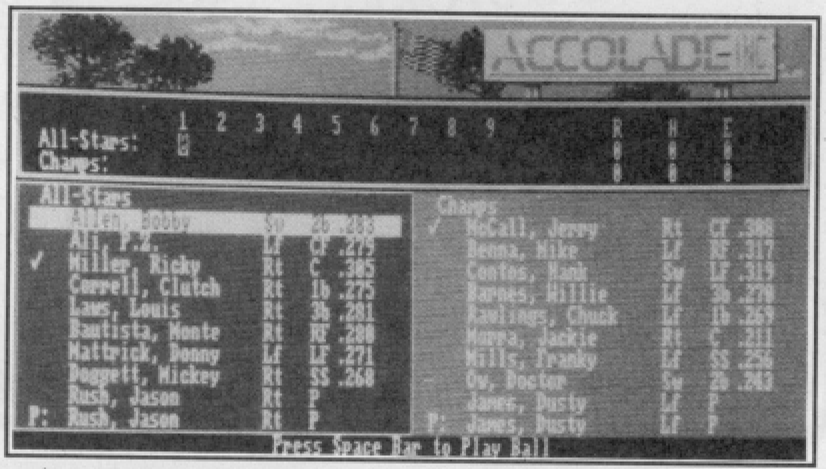
As I said at the beginning, these two games really are not comparable but, after a week it was Earl Weaver that I returned to. *Hardball* is instantly appealing, but in the long term, *Earl Weaver's* added features make the game more stimulating.

Francis Jago

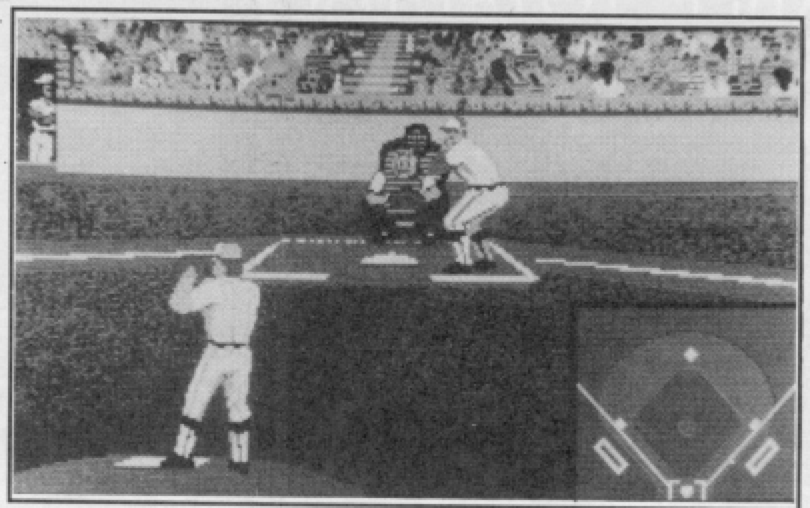




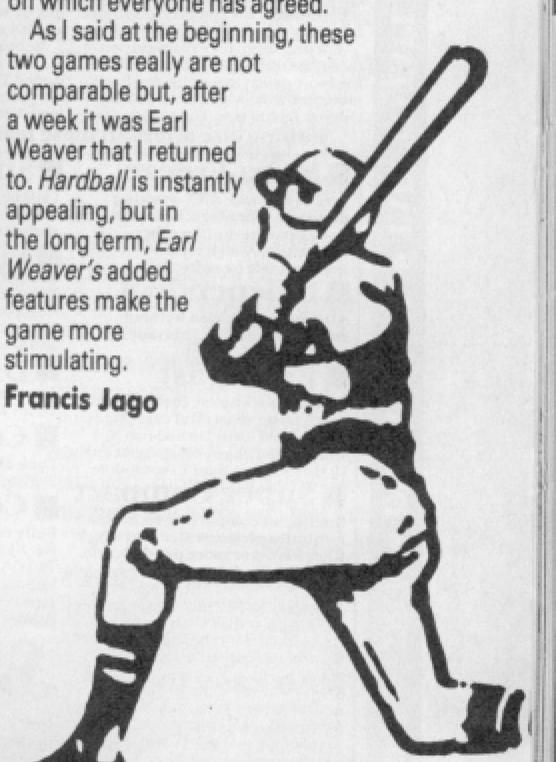
Third base takes the throw and you're out.



Scorecards current form for Hardball.



Hardball — excellent animation



EARL WEAVER

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Overall	8

SUPER HUEY

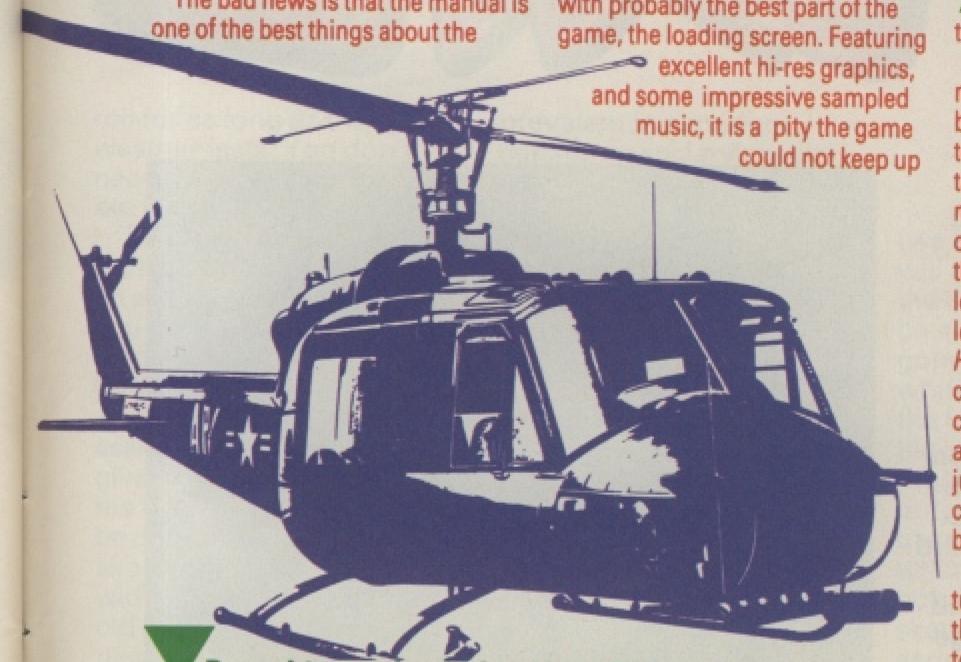
Amiga
Cosmi/US Gold
Price: £19.99

With a name like *Super Huey*, a game has either got to be extremely good, or else be prepared to be subjected to ridicule; for, where I come from, Huey is something that you do when you had one too many the night before! Americans, it seems, are far too refined to use a word as vulgar as this, because THEY all realise that a huey is a helicopter, and *Super Huey* is a flight sim.

Upon opening the lavish packaging, you find one 3.5" disc together with a small manual and what looks to be a photocopied piece of pink paper. On closer inspection, it turns out that the pink paper serves as mission instructions, and that the manual too seems photocopied.

The bad news is that the manual is one of the best things about the game (and it is pretty poor). It says in the bumph you get with the game that *Super Huey* is an "Authentic helicopter flight simulation" that . . . "teaches you how to fly rotary wing aircraft". Now I am not saying that the game is unrealistic, but if I ever get offered a flight in a helicopter flown by a *Super Huey* trained pilot, then I am going to run very fast in the opposite direction!

Once you have sat through the seemingly endless loading period that *Super Huey* demands (a combination of the Amiga's incredibly slow drives and a surprising amount of data — especially when you consider the end product) you are confronted with probably the best part of the game, the loading screen. Featuring excellent hi-res graphics, and some impressive sampled music, it is a pity the game could not keep up these high standards.



Having flicked through the manual, and pressed a few random buttons to see if I could get the game to crash, I decided to attempt a take-off. This is where I encountered my first problem. My Amiga is one of the early A1000s and I must therefore load Kickstart prior to loading any games. Having dutifully loaded Kickstart 1.2, and then *Super Huey*, I started the engines of the chopper, only to notice the rev counter moving across the screen, and various other instruments jumping about. Apparently, this is caused by Kickstart 1.2, but it hardly bodes well for the game, does it?

Starting again with Kickstart 1.1, I turned the engines on and followed the instructions until I was just about to take off. Having been lucky, or unlucky depending on the strength of your stomach, to have been flown around in a helicopter — albeit briefly — I know a little bit about the experience of taking off, and it is not too pleasant. In this game, however, it is all very simple and within seconds of first starting the game, you are hovering, having taken off as if you were in a lift.

The lack of realism does not, however, end with the take off. Flying is as simple as pie, combining mouse movements with the odd button depression. After about five minutes I was confidently zooming about the skies. Unfortunately, unlike some games, the ease of getting started in *Super Huey* is one of its biggest faults. Too many software houses mistake playability for ease of play, and Cosmi (the American software house originally responsible for this game) are a bad example.



▲ **Flying is simple but getting started is a pain**

In an attempt to convince myself that *Super Huey* was not THAT bad, I studied the manual a little harder, and took on one of the more adventurous of the three missions provided. Although not as dull as simply flying around, even this was spoiled by the appalling graphics and general playability.

The animation within *Super Huey* is awful, and the so called 3-D objects look more like cardboard than anything else. Nowhere within the game is there any indication of the Amiga's power, and that is one of the game's biggest faults. On a Spectrum, or even a Commodore 64, Super Huey would be a passable game, although the gameplay criticisms would stand, but on the Amiga it is nothing short of dreadful.

If you want a flight simulator, try *Flight Simulator II*, but please, don't waste your money on *Super Huey*, otherwise you really will feel sick!!

Francis Jago

▼ **Passable on the 64 but dreadful on the Amiga**



Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2
Overall





SKATE

Left your surfboard at Antiques Roadshow? Better get it back quick

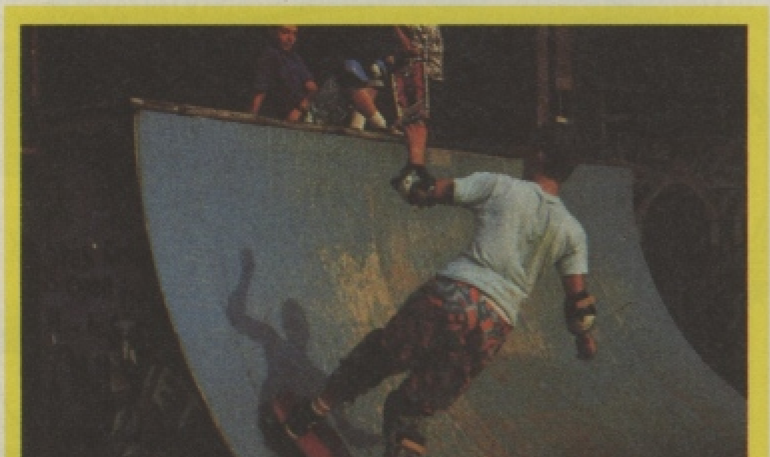
'Skate or die!' sneers the machine at an urban surfer before cranking up its huge on-top speakers and pounding out a wave of grinding guitar sonics that have you wincing at the controls.

The game of course, is Atari's *720°*, currently under conversion with US Gold, and a significant indication as to the current revival of skateboarding.

Skateboarding is back, believe it! So dig out that board your older brother dumped under the stairs nine or ten years ago and experience the thrills of low profile trucking.



In truth skateboarding never went away. Whilst those people who got into the craze of the late Seventies grew up, got bored, or found something else to do, a diehard bunch of skaters kept their sport rolling. Whilst kids whizzed past on their shiney new BMX bikes or roller skates on the back of the latest craze, a die-hard group of skaters kept churning out those airs and kick turns in the knowledge that the sport was here to stay. And now it seems everyone's remembered them again. Skateboarding has returned in earnest, it has its own fashion, its own bands. Hey, it's a way of life – no kidding! Just listen to some of the guys I spoke to. Like Derry Thompson, Chairman of the ESA – that's the English Skateboard Association.



"I took it up in '77 and just kept going. We set up the ESA and kept in touch with skaters all round the country and organized meetings and events. These people kept skating alive."

That's a view echoed by other veteran skaters I spoke to – like Barry Abrook the British Vertical champ. Barry is 21 and took it up when he was eleven. By my calculations that means he was there from the start. "It never lost its appeal for me or my brother. I made a lot of friends skating, it's become my life."

Barry is currently semi-pro and hopes to turn full pro later this year. That's the dream of any diehard skater

Skateboarding revives

OR DIE!

and the key is sponsorship. He's currently skating for the board company Zorlac. They supply all his gear and expenses. What he needs is a living wage. Many other boarders are 'Enterprise skaters', which means they get a grant from the Enterprise Board and use that to survive whilst they skate. Others work in the winter and jack it in for the summer months so they can roll for as long as the good weather lasts. You don't need to be that dedicated, but it helps.

The truth about skateboarding is that it's not an expensive sport. Once you've got a board and some protection that's it. You can burn some tarmac. A sound board, though, is essential. A good dealer will give you advice and so will the ESA. Basically it should be maple wood and it should be fairly strong and wide. The trouble with the old plasi boards was that they were small and unstable. You spent too much time biting concrete.

Good facilities help. It's all very well finding a hill giving the board a good kick and hanging on for life as you whizz past Ferraris and avoid articulated lorries but it's a bit hairy. What really helps is a ramp or pipe which allows you to do some of the tricks which make you realise Newton was wrong and man can defy the laws of gravity. These are springing up all over the place. London has several including one spanking new pipe just off the Westway, whilst other ramps can be found in Leicester, Swansea, Birmingham and Manchester to name but a few. Those omniscient 'board jockeys' at ESA will tell you if there's one in your area.

So how come skateboarding is back? And more importantly for the future, why did it die in the first place? Sociologists and historians will probably point to 'cyclical trends prevalent in a modern consumer society', (well I made that up, but you know what they're like). I asked the experts, "Wish I knew..." muses ESA's Derry Thompson. Well there you go.

"No, I'm not sure but I think there were a number of factors. I think the age group was originally a bit young, they got bored with it easily because it was just another American craze. But there were no facilities to encourage them to stick with it."

That's a view backed up by Vertical champ Barry Abrook. "I think lack of good facilities and places to skate in relative safety didn't help, but much of the equipment was naff." Take that into account with our weather and penchant for the next big thing and it was always going to struggle.

We've already said these aspects have improved with new ramps and solid boards (we know the weather never will so they'll have to make the best of that), but will that be enough to keep the sport going? Impressions are that whilst the sport is peaking in the US it's still going to get bigger here. Then, the ESA predict, it will die down a bit, but probably not back into the doldrums of '83-'84 when it reached its lowest ebb. The theory is that since skateboarding is more serious this time around more people will 'stick' after the initial burst of interest and media hype (that's what you're reading by the way.)

I spoke to some skaters down at the Calthorpe Project near Kings Cross and they echoed this view of skateboarding's phoenix-like return. "I've tried everything, BMX, rollerskates but nothing gave me quite the thrill as this", enthused Pete a skater who lives in Arnos Grove. "I'd die of boredom without it. I don't drink much or go out often – so this is my life."

And for many others the appeal of skating lies not only with the exhileration of staying with a piece of wood at high speeds but with, the, erm, culture if you like. Skateboarders share a taste with surfers for very loud baggy shorts with Hawaiian patterns, comic graphic T-shirts, basketball boots and sports socks. Then there's ripped-up bits and pieces which get added. It's a throwback to the DIY days of





by Mike Pattenden

SKATE



You can contact the English Skateboard Association at 2, Nothcliffe Heights, Marlpool Lane, Kidderminster Worcs, DY11 5DA.

poonk rock. As is the music.

Skateboarding has its own sound that's been prowling the underground for some time. Call it what you will, thrash, speed metal, hardcore, there are hundreds of bands out there churning out a noise that would have made the Clash and the Pistols leg it for cover. It's pure gutter guitar that generally kicks off with a thunderous rush and gets faster and faster, rather like a drag racer. The lyrics storm ineffectually against the tidal wave of sound and have to be barked out with all the savagery of a dobermann to make themselves heard. Many bands openly identify with skateboarding like Megadeath, Anthrax, Metallica who have a board named after them, and Britain's The Stupids and Heresy.

There's more than a touch of tongue in cheek about the image but the sound is deadly. They're a kind of living comic strip representation of mutie music. One of Megadeath's recent LPs was called 'Killing Is My Business And Business Is Good'. Just check the names of some of the many other bands out there destroying eardrums: Agent Orange, Jodie Foster's Army, Suicidal Tendencies, Puszone, Desecration, Warzone. These guys ain't going to be picking up much airplay with Simon Bates.

Brit champ Barry Abrook has his own band called Dance Kapital whilst ESA's Derry Thompson is an avid listener to the stuff. "A lot of the bands in this country have climbed on the bandwagon a bit. Basically skateboarding's been such a tight knit affair we know which bands were into it before everyone decided it could be fashionable."

NME cover stars The Stupids come in for a slagging. "I'd have known about them before this year."

But what of the current wave of computer games that pay homage to skateboarding? It's a universal thumbs up for *720°* all round. "A really accurate representation of the sport" says Thompson. That's backed up by Barry Abrook who must be more qualified than most to comment. "It captures it brilliantly – and it's funny."

Derry meanwhile has written his own program which ran on Sharp computers a couple of years ago. So you're not likely to have seen it. He hasn't seen *California Games* or *Metrocross*, "But the more games the better."

Word has it that EA are currently working on a skateboard game entitled, believe it or not, *Skate or Die*. But who needs to wait for another tape to arrive for your machine? You could actually strap on some kneepads, grab a board and give it a whirl. You never know, it may become a way of life!

10 Skateboard moves to break limbs to!



Most of the top skaters we spoke to seemed to have broken several bones performing difficult tricks, so here's a guide to ten bone crushing turns which bring new meaning to the phrase cruisin' for a bruisin'.

(1) OLLIE: make the board go into the air without using your hands
(2) SLIDE: a sideways skid
(3) FINGER FLIPS: spin the board 360° by flipping it.
(4) NOSE PIK: not a disgusting habit but a ramp move — an aerial manoeuvre landing on the front two wheels.
(5) MCTWIST: another ramp move taking the board through 540° (only two people in Europe can do this)
(6) CARBELLO: 360° Ollie
(7) BLUNT: landing on the back wheels and going backwards
(8) HAND PLANT: one handed handstand on a ramp (phew)
(9) FOOTPLANT: take one foot off the board and plant it on the coping.
(10) BONELESS ONE: Footplant with the leading foot

OR DIE!

BEASTLY JASON!

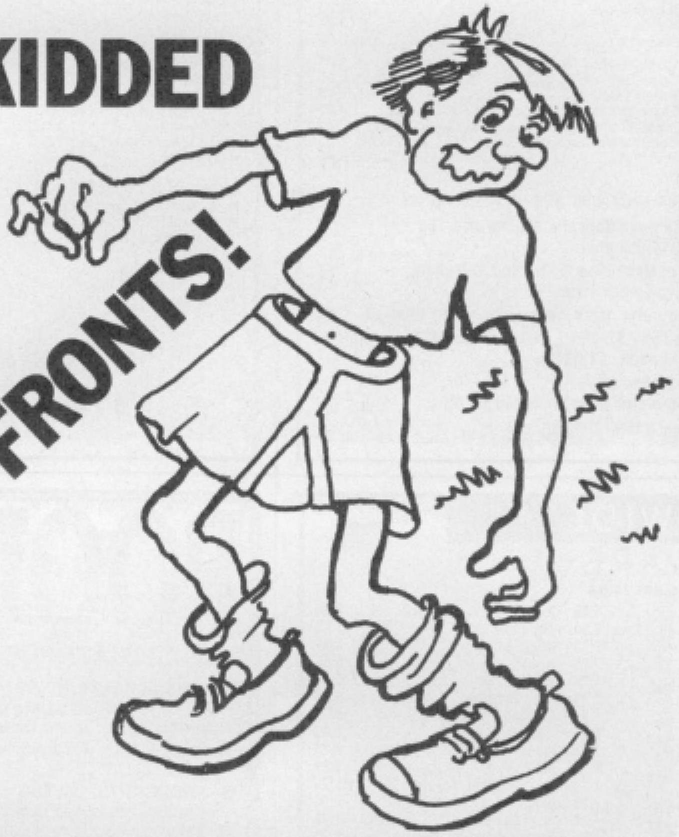
Lucky Jason Whalmers from Skelmersdale is an envied man, as he walks away with a Renegade coin-op, courtesy of Ocean software.
Jason's sharp rap won him his hard fought def prize, from thousands of hardened yo boy gamers.
Here is Jason's chillin' rap. Run DMC eat your heart out...
"My name is Jason and I'm here to say,
You ain't seen nothing 'till you've seen me play.
They come to play me from near and far,
'cos like C.U. I'm a star.
Short, fat, skinny, or tall,
I've played and beat them all.
I hope my rap makes the grade,
'cos I'd love my own Renegade."

JOYSTICK OLYMPICS

Twenty people are now feeling like champions because they knew that Jesse Owens was the man who upset Hitler. They knew that the next Olympmics are due to be staged in Seoul, South Korea. They knew tennis is going to be introduced as an Olympic event. But most important of all they knew our address, and because of their wisdom and knowledge these twenty people win a copy of Anco's brilliant *Summer Events*.

Craig Boyack, Dundee; Chris Rocks, Stirling; Eamonn Murphy, Birmingham; Jabir Bala, Blackburn; Mark Calvert, Birkenshaw; Andy Meikle, Essex; Trevor Wilkes, Milton Keynes; Stephen Connor, Kent; A. M. James, London; Dean Everest Jnr., Lincs.; Mark Plant, Sheffield; Austin Duffield, Norwich; Richard Walker, Brentwood; Matthew Griffiths, West Midlands; Gareth Nicholls, Surrey; Kelvin Herbert, Bristol; Jason Pooley, Ipswich; Keith Walpale, Norfolk; Tommy Taylor, Romford; Sam Touray, London.

SKIDDED Y-FRONTS!



Whilst Euge, Mike, and Nick were out on yet another N.A.B.P.P. rally (National Assciation for the banning of Pork Pies) Ferdy Hamilton thought it was about time to get this competition judged and tell Gareth Round of Tonge Moor, Bolton that he's a winner. Gareth wins a pig bag full of Oink goodies for his comic character named 'Sebastian Smellybottom and his Amazing Skidded Y-fronts." After initial feelings of repulsion young Ferd was quite amused and handed Gareth's entry to a none too enthusiastic Elaine Bishop, who gave us what we feel is a good noxious likeness of Seb, what do you think Gareth? The twenty runners up who also get goodies (but slightly fewer) are:

David Proctor, Oswaldtwistle, Lancs.; Steven Adler, Ebley, Nr. Stroud, Glos.; Angela Saini, W-Ton; Nicholas Arter, Highwoods, Colchester; D. R. Clarke, Peckham, London; Andrew Wells, Netherton, Dudley; N. Parker, Yarm., Cleveland; Colin Hall, Harrogate, N. Yorks.; Victor Love, Strabane, N. Ireland; John Streek, Dublin; Shaun Michael Cuffe, Aylesham, Kent; Alan Francois, Hackney, London; Phillip Grant, Greenock, Scotland; Keith Berry, Fleetwood, Lancs; J, C, & Richard Sharp, Sheffield; Richard Walker, Dudley, W. Midlands.

WARP SPASMS

If you didn't win our fab *Slaine* T-Shirts, please try not to go into a warp spasm — at least not in public. There'll be a *CU* poster along soon. And if you did, your name is one of the following:

Simon Cullet, Co. Armagh; Barry Clifford, Ayr, Scotland; Luke Jacobson, Putney, London; Kevin Doley, Kilburn, London; Ben Borely, Topsham, Devon.

GAZ' NEW TOP.

Now five lucky people can wear their Rainbird T-shirts and say "Get mucky" with a lisp to all their mates. Their friends will probably think they're weird and ignore them, but at least they'll have the awfully vogue Rainbird T-shirt... wooo!

Richard Walker, Sedgley, Dudley; Norman Cod, Newton-with-Scales, Preston, Lancs.; Doofus Eccles, London NW1; Tony Makos, Glasgow; N. Newitt, Ilford, Essex.

PRIME REMOVERS.

There are ten people on this Earth that have angered us at C.U. These are the ten people who won a copy of the lurve god's super-duper, wonderful, autograph, which only three people including Odin (high lord, and master himself) have a copy of. This priceless relic is inscribed in chickens blood on ten copy's of his fab 12" single *Prime Mover*. Now, in thanks, repeat 12,000 times after me "O Thank ye Zod. O thank ye...

B. Owens, Duffield, Derby; William Johns, Ryde, Isle of Wight; Marshall Kiefer, Ilfracombe, N. Devon; M. Nunn, St. Albans, Herts.; Elizabeth Ixer, Ipswich, Suffolk; Gavin Graham, Dublin, Ireland; D. Edwards, West Midlands; Craig Bolton, Dudley, West Midlands; A. D. Collins, East Horsley, Surrey; P. Byrne, London N1.

ZOOM WITH MASTERTRONIC

Five lucky people can now walk the streets with a racey looking Mastertronic/Le Mans T-Shirt on. After their sponsorship of the race, it seems strange that we have heard nothing of a game. Oh well, keep your ears to the walls and your eyes to these pages and who knows... The five sporty types are:

Paul Buncombe, Burnham-On-Sea, Somerset; David Oates, Queensbury, Bradford; Jonathan Morris, Cheshunt, Herts.; Mart Brett, Harrow, Middx.; Stuart Thomas, Pulborough, W. Sussex.

Arcades

BLACK TIGER

Capcom (2 × 10p)

In the strange cavernous world of *Black Tiger*, you play a lone brave fighter, armed only with an enormous steel ball-and-chain and a sheaf-full of throwing knives. It's dark, it's dank, the floors are in a terrible state of repair, the walls are littered with the fossils of trilobytes, icthyosaurs and various other long-extinct creatures — and as if that wasn't unpleasant enough for you, this gloomy twilight place is absolutely chockful of the most frightfully nasty beings, whose sole guiding motive in life seems to be to send you to that great wine bar in the sky ASAP.

Your mission is to kill as many nasties as possible until you find one of the wisemen – they're scattered about the place, magically frozen solid – and set him free. In return he'll give you some extra time or some "zen" and then, money perhaps, he'll offer to sell you some more weapons, which will enable you to kill the enemies more efficiently.

You've got a fire button, and a jump button which controls the vertical movements of your rather spritely onscreen hero. Just as well really – there's plenty of chasms to be leapt across, platforms to be mounted and pillars to be shinned up.

Your weaponry does seem almost comically powerful in the beginning. Every time you press fire there's a volley of knives and your steel ball shoots out to the end of your chain. *And* you're armour-clad from head to foot. How could you possibly need *more* hardware?

You soon find out, however, that life as a subterranean gladiator can be very short and brutish indeed. First of all, there are the orcs that chase you around the place swinging meat cleavers – they're not too difficult to deal with singly, but when they gang up on you they can chop your armour off and butcher you with ease. Then there are the bats, the fire-ball throwing devils, the skeletal zombies and maneating plants which spring unexpectedly up out of the ground, the snakes which coil themselves around the overhead pillers, enormous evil-faced slabs of living rock which bounce on you, and even the occasional giant dragon.

There are also stone jars to smash, hour glasses to pick up and treasure chests to be plundered for extra money, time and points, and when you succeed in dispatching a baddie they usually leave some zenies in their wake too.

The graphics are excellent, if a little unchanging and gloomy and there's a suitably menacing soundtrack, but you don't have very much time to admire these delights as you bounce about the place, trying to follow the sometimes confusing wall-mounted arrows which should lead you to your next wiseman, while keeping your vitality level up and watching your time.

Black Tiger isn't all straight forward bounce 'n' shoot: whenever you encounter a foe, you'll have to work out how best to defeat him – simply thrashing away at close quarters is liable to affect your vitality level drastically – and you've got to judge distances accurately or you're liable to find yourself impaled on some sharp rocks at the foot of one of the many volcanic ravines.

Most important of all, *Black Tiger* is a pretty addictive poison, once you've mastered the basic tactics for dealing with the various problems that you'll encounter.

GRAPHICS:	7
SOUND:	6
TOUGHNESS:	7
ENDURANCE:	8
VALUE:	8
OVERALL:	7

Chopped down by the minotaur.



One wiseman located — but watch your back.



A chip off the old block (*groan — Ed.*).



Arcades



▲ Prepare for take-off



▲ Bandits!

AFTERBURNER

Sega
(1 × £1)

Most of you won't have seen one of Sega's new *Afterburners* yet – as I write there's just one of the deLuxe versions in the whole U.K., at the Family Leisure arcade in Old Compton Street, London – but the chances are that six months from now there won't be an arcade gamer in this green and pleasant land that hasn't climbed into its customised wraparound console.

"State of the art" is probably the arcade industry's most indiscriminantly-bandied cliche, but in the case of *Afterburner*, it's justified. Briefly, what we have here is a hydraulically-controlled console which lurches in four directions, and which houses an incredibly fast-moving and exciting aerial shoot 'em up. Oh, and by the way, it costs a quid a game. *CU*.

No, we couldn't believe it at first either: what mere arcade game, no matter how superfab, could justify this kind of price tag? There was nothing for it but to pool our petty cash forms and head down to its Soho test site with our pockets stuffed full of pound coins.

After ten minutes, our turn rolled around and we got a chance to see for ourselves. I climbed up into the seat, inserted one of my precious quidlets, and pressed the start button.

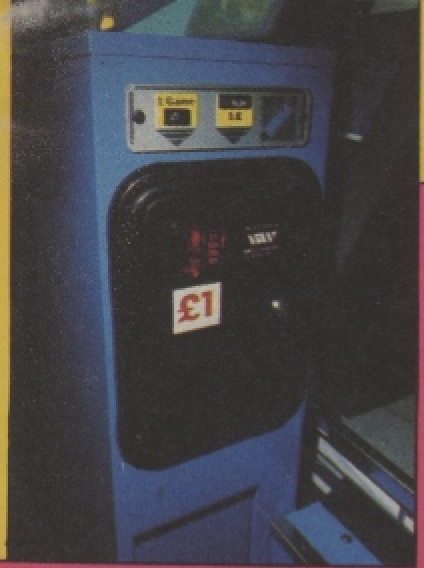
The introductory screen cleared to reveal my jet poised for take-off on the deck of an aircraft carrier. There was a burst of exhaust and I started to move forward at first slowly, then more quickly. When I reached the edge of the runway, I suddenly found

▼ Winged!



▼ Oh-oh, heat seeking missiles ahoy.







WHOOO OAHH!!!



Hmm, looks like a nice place to visit.

myself jerked backwards as my onscreen craft soared up into the deep blue sky.

Using the joystick I levelled out. Almost immediately, dots appeared on the horizon – rapidly approaching enemy aircraft.

Built into the joystick are two fire buttons. The first, a trigger, unleashes a steady double-stream of tracer bullets. The second, activated by your thumb, launches heat seeking missiles. Your tracer bullets – and indeed the enemy's rockets – behave in an extremely realistic way. For instance, you have to aim at where you think your enemy will be in a split-second's time, rather than where he is now. You have a gunsight, which enlarges when you lock on to a target, at which point you can discharge one of your heat-seeking missiles – these are limited in number, but as destruction of the particular enemy craft is assured without your having to pump away at it for ages using your conventional weapon, intelligent use can mean greater survival time.

And, believe you me, survival time is what it's all about here. *Afterburner* hammers along at an almost mindbendingly fast pace, with enemy aircraft, and their heat-seeking missiles blasting at you so quickly that rational thought and tactics are really out of the question – reactions are all you've got to rely on. And, as if the nasties in front of you weren't tough enough, there are also waves of the blighters coming in from *behind* – you can't see 'em, but every so often your radar starts creating an onscreen commotion and a warning is barked out of your radio.

And when you do try to take evasive action by frantically waggling your joystick, that's when *Afterburner*'s hydraulics really come into their own. You're jerked violently to left and right as your plane weaves to avoid the missiles. Frequently your onscreen plane completely flips over so that you're flying upside down, and, though the cabinet itself doesn't actually attempt to physically reproduce this particular effect (thank God),



Try one of these for size, suckers!



Wow — I think my brain is developing a permanent list.



Arcades

what with all this high-speed lurching back and forth, you hardly notice.

The onscreen graphics combine brilliant realism and detail with that slightly dizzy-making colour scheme that *Lock On* and *Space Harrier* have – which is not inappropriate, given the effects of the hydraulics on your beleagured sense of equilibrium. Some of the effects are really spectacular. Usually when you're hit, you explode in an enormous ball of orange flame, but occasionally you're "winged": when this latter fate befalls you, you see smoke pouring from the relevant side of the plane, then spreading to envelope most of your crippled and rapidly-descending craft, until finally you hit water – or land – and skim along the surface in a series of explosions culminating in your fiery disintegration.

The scenery about you is spectacular, as in rapid succession you pass over the deep blue sea, then small shoals of islands, then a city, before you find yourself speeding through a great canyon, trying to avoid hitting any of the sheer rock faces through which you must thread your way. I must confess, I couldn't, and after several earth-shaking crashes, and my last few pounds, I surrendered my seat to the next eager customer.

So, a verdict? Well, there's no doubt that *Afterburner* represents easily the most sophisticated combination of hydraulics and shoot 'em up produced to date. The excitement is really more that of taking a rollercoaster ride than merely having a blast on a coin-op. Everything happens so quickly, with day-fading-into-night effects and landscape changes vying for your attention with waves of fighters and missiles, that you only really notice that you're sweating and shaking when, after a few levels, a refuelling plane drops you a line, giving you a much-needed five-second breather.

The speed and toughness of the game are such that apparently the makers are contemplating offering an easier program to enable hapless gamers (like me) to survive for at least a minute or two. As it stands, you're unlikely to last for more than a few seconds on your first few attempts.

Which brings me to *Afterburner*'s most controversial feature – its price. It is the first coin-op in this country to cost a pound for just one three-life play. Over the course of three visits to this machine – involving a total playing time of, perhaps, fifteen minutes – I spent *eighteen pounds*. This, as a friend observed, is more than many families in Britain spend in a week on food.

There is also going to be an upright version, costing 50p a play, on release, but undoubtedly the major attraction of *Afterburner* is its marrying of a good, fast-moving shoot 'em up to an amazing piece of simulation-style hardware, and, frankly, if you take away the cabinet, you're going to take away a lot of the appeal too.

The bottom line is, one pound for any coin-op game – no matter how good – is probably too much to pay, particularly when your first few blasts are liable to be over before you know it.

Afterburner is an utterly brilliant game – but nobody should have to spend this much to experience it.

Nick Kelly

GRAPHICS:	9
SOUND:	9
TOUGHNESS:	10
ENDURANCE:	9
VALUE:	4
OVERALL:	8

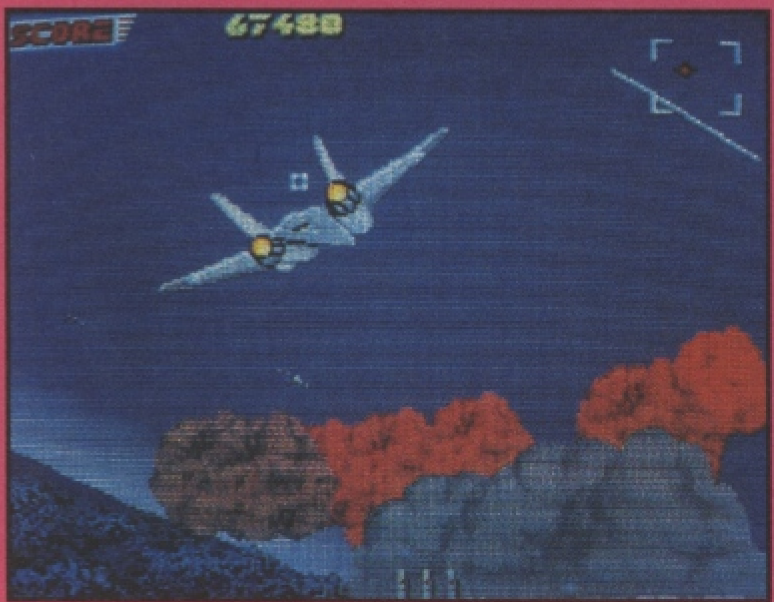
▶ More bandits!





▲ wonder what's behind this cloud . . .?

▼ Now, *that's* what I call a good shot



A morning with AFTERBURNER

If you'd really like a blast on *Afterburner* but can't wait for the 64 conversion or your local arcade to get the message, pop the answer to one pathetically simple question by 16th October to *Afterburner Compo, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.* The first name drawn out of the fabled *CU* compo hat will treated, with a mate, to an entire morning's free blasting on *Afterburner* courtesy of distributors Brent Leisure. And, just to prove that we can be generous too, we'll cover your travelling expenses plus you'll get to partake in a serious nosh-in with the *CU* crew. So what are you waiting for?

Which blockbusting Sega game can you make from these jumbled up letters?: OURNUT.


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Arcades

DEVIL WORLD

Konami
(2 × 10p)

Sometimes the conscientious gamer finds him- or herself in a moral dilemma. There you are, flying your starfighter or brandishing your sword or whatever it happens to be, and the first wave of enemy attackers comes for you. But, just two milliseconds before you let loose your first rocket/arrow/laser, doubt grips you. Who are you? How have you come to find yourself in this strange situation? And is it really right that you should exterminate these creatures who are behaving towards you in such a threatening way?

Perhaps it's not their fault that they're twenty-foot tall, green and carrying a machete – maybe they're lonely, and are going to hand you the machete by way of a gift, in the hope that you won't be like all the others and try to annihilate them. Or perhaps *you* yourself are the aggressor in this dispute, and these aliens are merely defending their families and homes… (by this point, unless your thought processes are really fast, you'll have been blown away).

The opening screens of Konami's *Devil World*, however, put you in the picture immediately. In a neat little picture-story, you are shown the hero and heroine, Condor and Labryna, at a press conference. Condor is an Indiana Jones lookalike and, like Harrison Ford's famous onscreen character, he's an explorer. He's just showing off this mysterious sarcophagus which he's brought back from his travels to a bunch of journalists, including Labryna, When, in a scene vaguely reminiscent of the one in Raiders Of The Lost Ark where the ark is opened, the lid pops off the sarcophagus and some kind of mysterious other-worldly force comes storming out, clearly upset at being tampered with. Next thing you know, Condor, and the hapless Labryna who was standing interviewing him, are whisked to a ghoulish land called *Devil World*.



Labryna dispatches an orc — but has she spotted the tree root?



"Ladies and Gentlmen of the press. . ."



". . . Wow! That old one-eyed antique dealer. . ."



". . .never said anything about. . ."

The object of the exercise is to escape, of course, and you can either play one of our two heroes by yourself or join forces with a mate, taking on the role of one character each.

You've got to make your way around a series of different areas, searching for the key that will open the escape trapdoor that leads into the next area. You're initially armed with fairly standard guns or knives, but as time goes by you'll get the opportunity to upgrade your armoury to include such goodies as bazookas and bombs.

You're likely to need them, too. Each area is littered with hordes of Minotaur-style (i.e. half-man-half-bull) creatures who would like nothing more than to beat you to a pulp. You've also got to watch out for the special monsters that each level brings, from dragons, to enormous fire-creatures wielding fiery whips, to an incredibly sneaky tree which can stretch out a root and drag you into its demonic maw.

Though your primary objective is to escape, you can pick up more vitality by locating energy-pods which you'll find dotted about the place.

The first couple of levels are simple enough to negotiate: the monsters are fairly easily avoided or destroyed, and the key isn't too difficult to locate. Things do get tougher, however, as time wears on and you find yourself in more tricky areas of this fiendish world, such as the land where you have to skip from rock to rock in a moving lava-stream, while fighting off the deadly advances of winged devils.

As with all these "vitality"-based games, one tends to simply flail away at one's attackers without much regard being paid to tactics. This fairly unskilful approach worked surprisingly well for me, and I didn't have too much trouble getting through the levels.

There are some nice graphic touches, such as the movement of the chest-high grass through which our heroes must wade and the rickety rope-ladder which they have to negotiate.

Devil World is, it must be said, a fairly *Gauntlet*-y product, and, as such, doesn't score too highly in the originality stakes. It's also not tremendously difficult to play and, therefore its appeal to those mysterious gamers CHI and AAA (the ones who are always at the top of the high score tables) may be limited.

But for the rest of us mere mortals *Devil World* has enough impressive monsters and playability to keep us amused in between bouts of real excitement.



". . .thiiiiiiiiiisss. . ."



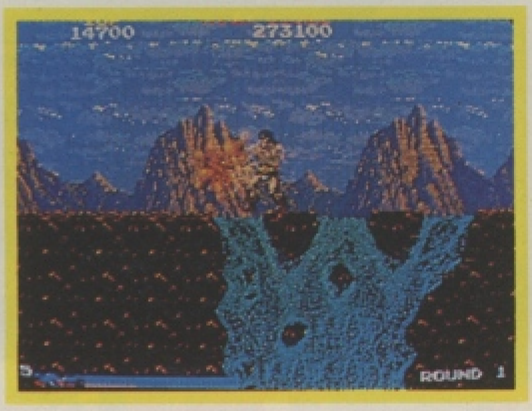
You may be blue, but you don't scare me.

Nick Kelly

GRAPHICS:	7
SOUND:	6
TOUGHNESS:	4
ENDURANCE:	5
VALUE:	6
OVERALL:	6

Rastan Saga is a classic slice of sword and fantasy headbanging. Who better to play it then than Iron Maiden's Bruce Dickinson . . . .





Left: the warrior gets wasted, but (right) shlerpp! he wastes a harpy.

MAIDEN VOY

When the name of Iron Maiden's lead singer, Bruce Dickinson is whispered in one's presence, one is initially a wee bit, erm, *nonplussed* to discover that when he's not fronting the world's most popular heavy metal combo, Bruce spends most of his time in a white padded suit with a weird sieve-like thingy over his head and a foil in his hand. For Bruce, you see, is a fencer. Rather a good one, actually. Trains with the English national team, runner-up in last year's London Championships, that sort of thing. So seeing as how Ocean had just been on the blower to us about their forthcoming licence of the coin-op smash, *Rastan Saga*, and seeing as *Rastan* involves wielding a sword, and seeing how Ver Maiden were taking a break in between two of their customary eight-month long tours, and seeing as we can put two and two together as well as the next man, we thought we'd invite Bruce in to have a razzle on *Rastan*, once again lovingly captured in a portable case by an Ocean techno-wiz and currently languishing in our storeroom (*just waiting to be carried off by a lucky CU reader, actually — see compo, p.106*)

As any Maiden fan knows, Bruce and his merry men go in for some fairly gruesome record sleeves, invariably featuring a tasteful shot of their cuddley mascot, Eddie, in an advanced stage of decay, either bursting out of his own grave or preparing to send some hapless human to his. Their lyrics, too, are colourful and make frequent references to death, destruction and degenerating corpses.

In fact, Bruce isn't really yer average blood-crazed metal mutha. A super-fit ex-member of the Territorial Army, he's friendly, polite, and very, very funny.



He's currently talking to publishers and ere long we may see his first ever novel on the shelves, which is, according to its author, "a black comedy". His fans obviously appreciate his sense of humour: when he arrives at his manager's office to meet me, he finds a little bundle of birthday presents (a week early, it turns out), which include a bundle of very weird religious magazines, a pair of sun-goggles with a secret water pistol built in between the eyes, and a small box with cows on the outside which moos loudly when turned upside down!

He could never be fairly described as a shy retiring type, and when it comes to fencing, one gets the distinct impression Brice would happily talk all day about his favourite sport.

"The last national ranking I got was compiled from two years back, because I did a tour in between and couldn't compete, and that was about 35 or something. I've got a bit better since then, so I'm hoping that I can plonk myself in the top twenty this season".

We see. But how would you feel if you were called upon to defend yourself with a sword for real, like people might have been a century or two ago, Bruce?

"Well, I don't know. Fencing in those days was a great deal different. I mean, there were the same basic principles, but obviously today it's just a sport. People tended to be a lot more cautious in those days because it was for real. But if, say, somebody did have a go at me, I mean, if some maniac came at me wielding a sword, I'd pick up a pool cue and feel perfectly safe — I'd just bash his brains out!"

Phew! Well, after all that fighting talk, it seemed like as good a time as any to turn on the *Rastan Saga* machine and to give him a go at some onscreen sword-swishing.

For the first few lives Bruce just stands in one place, laying waste around himself with his trusty

Bruce gets to grips with Rastan



broadsword. Alas, this tactic ends inevitably in his being overpowered by the huge crowds of monster-warriors that accumulate.

"Aaaaghh", he groans as he's chopped down for a third time. "I think that getting a bit of forward momentum is the key here", he observes sagely.

Once he does start moving, his success-rate improves markedly. He quickly masters the knack of chopping assailants as he walks, and decides to climb down a rope into an underground cavern in the hopes of being able to get hold of the axe that hangs from the ceiling. No sooner than he's down in the depths, however, he finds himself under attack from a vicious swarm of bats.

"Aghh—@$&£☆ off! These are really nasty, aren't they? I'm going to have to learn how to deal with these".

He soon discovers the secret to dealing with the bats (swing the sword above your head) and gets a chance to move on further on his quest. In the background, the snow-tipped mountain ranges remind him of Tibet — not that he's got much opportunity for sight-seeing, though. Apart from increasing numbers of monster-warriors and bats, he encounters skeletons with four club-throwing arms each, gryphons who spit fire balls ("you've got to kneel down to get the fireball breathers, otherwise they nobble you"), fiercesome Amazons and a strange, angelic-looking flying harpy ("@☆£$! him — I don't know what he does, but I'm not waiting to find out").

In *Rastan Saga,* as you pass through the levels, you've got to do plenty of climbing up and down ropes, descending into underground passages and scaling sheer cliff faces. At one point, Bruce is called upon to jump off the side of a cliff, grab hold of a swinging creeper, jump off the creeper onto a conveniently located cloud (?), jump off the edge of that cloud onto another one below, then jump upwards again so as to grab a fiery sword which dangles tantalisingly from the bottom of the first cloud. Miss the creeper, and you land on the first of a series of steps which take you down into a cavern full of beasts to be defeated. Once you've started your descent (either deliberately or by missing the creeper) there's no going back up. After missing the jump a few times ("down into the pits we go *again*", Bruce moans in a Black Adder-ish voice) our hero succeeds in catching the creeper — only to miss the second jump and plummet to his death below! A couple more attempts ("it'd take some money, if you ever wanted to invest in getting good at this in an arcade", he observes) and he does succeed in getting the coveted fire-sword.

This makes life a lot easier for a while, as Bruce merrily blasts the nasties with bolts of flame. But he then comes to another axe, and makes the mistake of taking it: in a flash, the lovely, destructive sword he worked so hard for disappears — he discovers, too late, that our warrior can only carry one weapon at a time. "I preferred the fire, to be honest", he sighs. Nevertheless, Bruce does manage to complete the level and starts to make his way through the mountain-top castle, which is guarded by, among other things, Godzilla-style guards with armour all the way up one side of their bodies, and spikes which spring up from the floor to impale the unsuspecting unwelcome visitor. Would he survive to the end of this level too? Would his virtuoso swordsmanship carry him through right to the end of the saga? Alas, we were



not to find out. Time is running out and so, it seems, is Bruce's enthusiasm.

"Whoops", he says as he loses a life to a half-man-half-crocodile, "let's knock this on the head, much as I would like to play itn through to another set of mountain ranges."

Nevertheless, he's already managed to get further than many I've seen on *Rastan*. So to what do you owe to your high-score, Bruce?

"Well, if I stick with any computer game long enough I do usually do pretty well on them. But the problem is that I get easily bored. I get bored, if you like, by the limitations of the coordination things on this. There's always a trick to each section, and discovering the trick is the key. Like, for instance when *Donkey Kong* first



came out, people would get stuck on the third level for ages until they discovered how to crack it, you know, I get bored. I prefer games more like the *Star Wars* arcade game, which is actually a 3-D representation of something, almost like a flight stimulator. I like it when it's really adrenalin-producing, where you can imagine yourself in a cockpit, blazing away at things."

Bruce, it soon transpires, likes a lot of realistic action in his arcade games. One of his favourites is the Hotshots' fave *Mach III,* which he says "really gets the adrenalin going".

"It's got a lazer disc, so you're like flying through a real landscape. I liked the fact that superimposed over the landscape you've got your fighter, and although you're not actually flying it, because you're flying a course, you can position it in various places on the screen. It's the reaction element of it, and the fact that as you got to play the game more and more you were really looking ahead and learning the pattern of things. And I really like the idea of things coming at you from the distance in 3-D, and having to think of about four things at once."

And his impressions of *Rastan Saga*?

"I think it's good. Given that my hobby's fencing, I could probably occupy myself on it for a while, even though it really doesn't bear that much relation to fencing. But actually I think I prefer things like *Galaxian* — if I'm going to play a game like this, I think I'd rather not play something that's not trying to be an inadequate representtion of something. I'd much rather just blast away, or whatever, in two dimensions, because that's all that something like this can really do."

Then, being a purist, Bruce attempts to work out what a genuinely accurate fencing game would involve. The nearest thing he can conceive of would be something a bit like the boxing game, *Punch Out*, where you face your opponent and just see your own fists. But then again, as he's quick to point out, the similarities between the kind of swordsmanship that *Rastan*'s warrior goes in for, and what Bruce spends his Saturdays doing aren't really that close. Fencing, y'see, has evolved into a very subtle and rarified form of combat, all parries, precise thrusting and so on — much less obviously destructive than the hack'n'bash tactics used by broadswordsmen like our coin-op hero here.

"Having said that, it's a very efficient way of killing people. I mean this guy's just hacking away at people. Most duels that went on in olden times using swords that hacked went on for *hours*. Eventually it came to be realised that you could actually chop alarmingly large pieces off people without them dying."

Talking of video games again, are there any plans afoot for an *Iron Maiden* game to join the existing pinball machine in the arcades? I mean, I think Eddie would compare more than favourably with most of these monsters . . .

"Oh, *no* comparison at all, I think. I mean, my favourite one in this game was the flapping harpy-type chap with the bat wings — he made a nice big squirt of blood when he was extinguished, but he doesn't compare with Eddie's decaying body matter."

And with this enigmatice statement, the interview ends. Will Bruce make the Olympic fencing team? Will Eddie star in some frightfully gorey Iron Maiden game? Will *Rastan Saga* be the coin-op conversion of the year? Guess which we'd prefer . . . ?



COMPO

That careless Bruce chappie seems to have left something behind, Michael". "So he does, Nicholas. But what can it be."

"Oooh, look, Michael, it's one complete set of Iron Maiden albums, plus five copies of their most recent fab waxing, "Somewhere In Time", all with his noble signature across them!"

"But Nicholas, what shall we do with them — goodness knows where Bruce is by now, and we've both already got all of Ver Maiden's albums twice over."

"I've got an idea, Michael, why not ask those clever *CU* readers to answer a simple question, and then give the complete set of albums to the first correct answer and the five copies of "Somewhere In Time" to the next five names out of the tricorned hat."

"Wow, that's brilliant, Nicholas, we could ask them something like: What's the number of the beast; (a) 999, (b) 666, or (c) 142?"

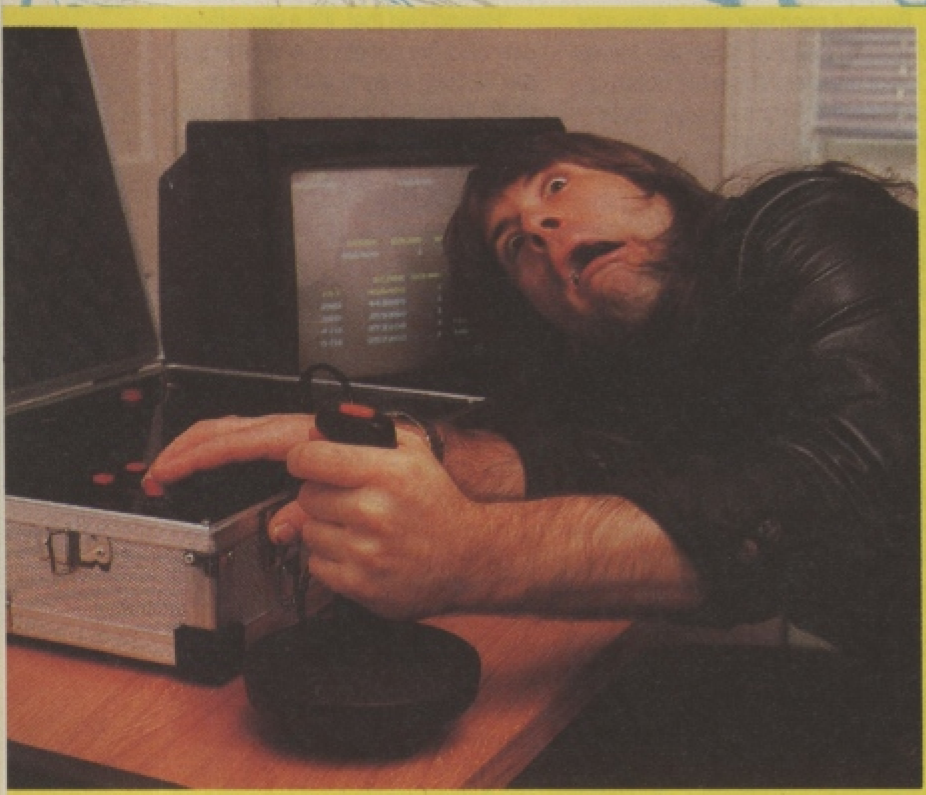
"Yeah, and then they could send their entries into Maiden Compo, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU".

"But could they get their entries in by Oct 14th?"

"Sure they could, Mike."

Ocean in shock RASTAN coin-op giveaway

CU COMPETITION



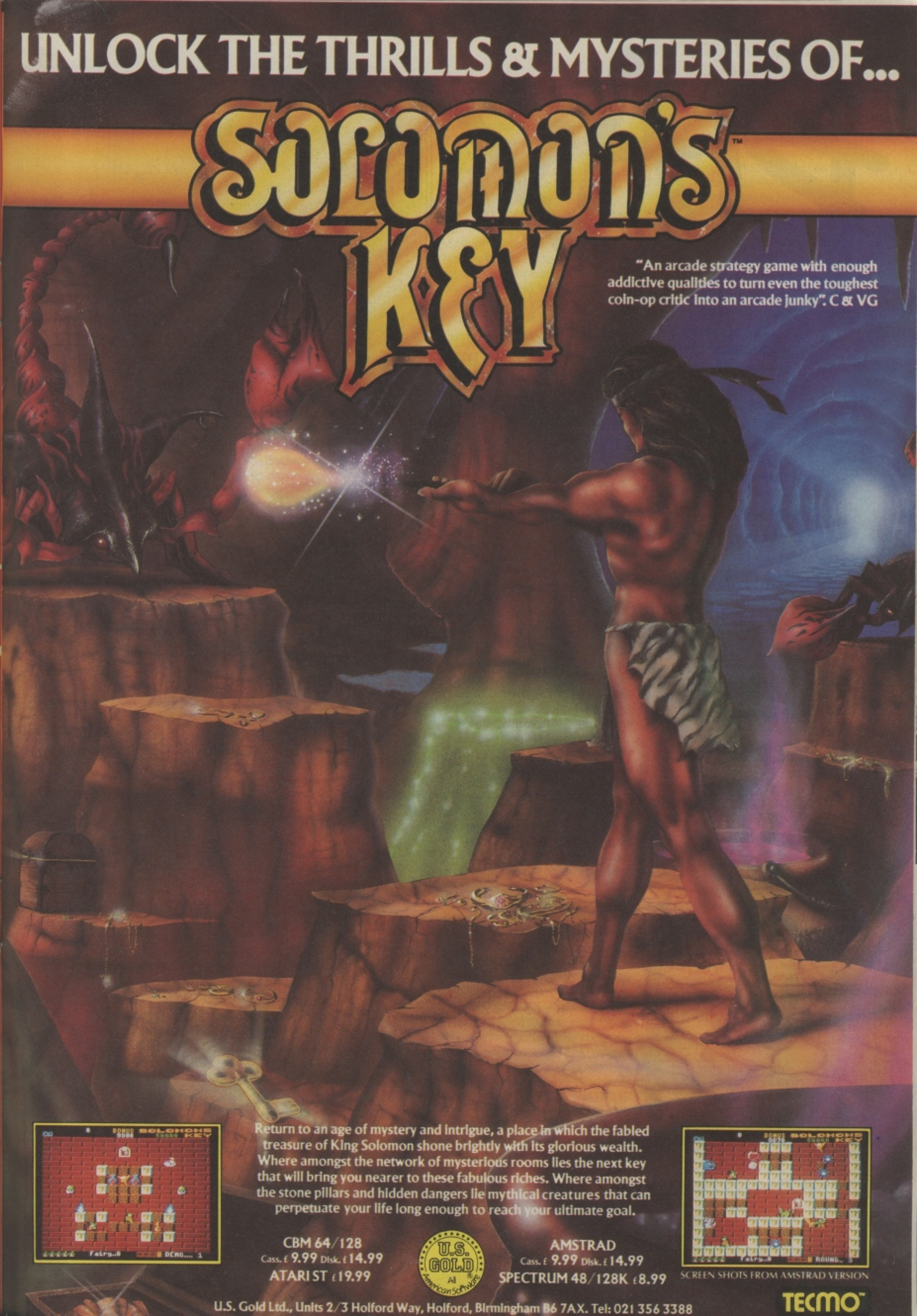
Oyez, oyez, here is the news. Not very much happened today in the gulf. The stock market was feeling a bit poorly earlier on, but it's fine now. Some football player is going to move to Spain. Pretty Linda Golightly-Weird got the shock of her life when she discovered a twenty-seven foot anaconda in her laundry basket. And that's about it really . . . BUT WAIT!!! SOMETHING'S COMING IN ON THE HOTLINE!!! What's that you say? Sorry, it must be a bad line, we *thought* you said that Ocean are going to give some lucky *CU* reader their very own uniquely developed portable *Rastan Saga* coin-op machine, but that can't be right, surely . . . It is??? And it's the same one that Bruce Dickinson chappie tried his hand at??? And all they've got to do is answer three simple questions, and one tie-breaker??? AMAZING!!! STUPENDOUS!!! WHAT A SCOOP!!! And what are those questions??? Oh, we see!!! So, let's just get this right — any *CU* reader who can answer the questions below:

WIN A RASTAN SAGA

(a) the name of the geezer who wrote The Three Musketeers;
(b) the name of the Walt Disney movie based on the exploits of King Arthur and The Knights of the Round Table; and
(c) which of these three things — claymore, eyrie and epee — is not a type of sword.

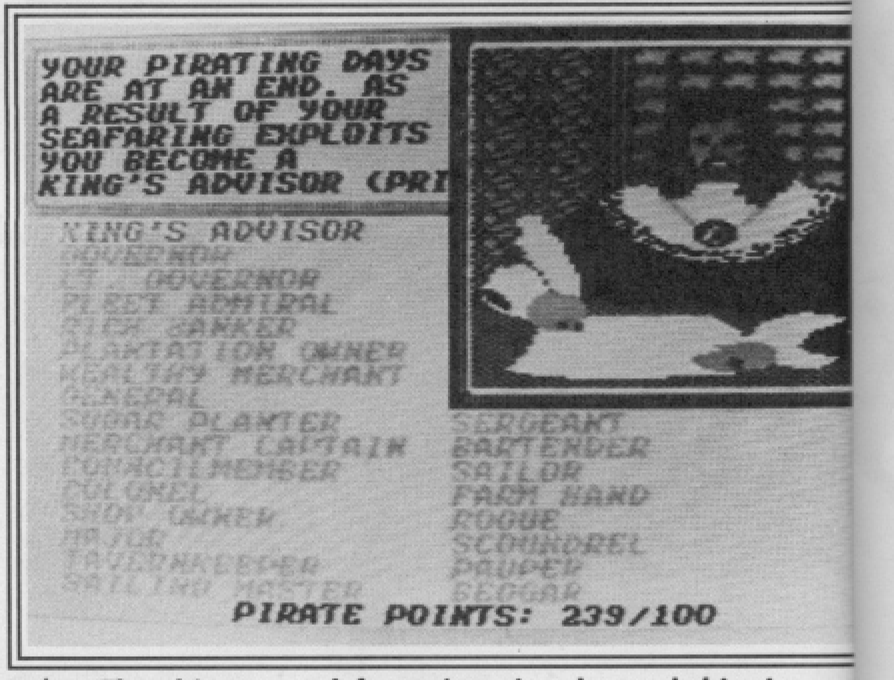
As a tie-breaker we want you to invent the most brilliant name for a heavy metal band ever. The winner will have their name thrown into Mike Pattenden's hat. The first name to be drawn out being the winner. INCREDIBLE!!! TOTALLY AWESOME!!! entries to reach us by October 12th on an oily denim waistcoat. To Headbanger Compo, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU? OK, we think we've got all that. Phew — who says nothing ever happens around here?

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PLAY TO WIN



The ultimate peak for a pirate is to be made king's adviser

PIRAT

Avast behind! No the Ed hasn't just walked in, it's Daniel Gilbert providing some swashbuckling tips for the Microprose surprise hit sim Pirates!

STARTING OUT

The first step to mastering Pirates is to read the manual VERY THOROUGHLY. Do it now, even if you think you know it well — there are so many subtle tips in there that you're bound to have missed a few.

At this point you should decide what you want from the game; if you are playing it truly as a simulation, you should probably stop reading now, go and play the game, learning as you go, and just enjoy yourself. If you are playing for keeps, however, you will need to know to gain 'pirate points' and finish high up the retirement job table.

CREATING YOUR CHARACTER

The main tips here are simply which skill to choose. The two to ignore are *Wit, Charm,* and *Medicine:* Charm is unnecessary if you're successful (!), as the Governors will invite you to dinner often enough for you to make your mark on their daughters anyway; and if you are being wounded often enough to warrant Medicine then you ain't playin' right. Of the remaining three, Gunnery is O.K., but has drawbacks (see Combat), and Navigation is fairly useful when you're trying to lug around great big square-riggers. But of all the skills Fencing is the most useful, as nearly all the important aspects of the game boil down to man-to-man combat.

The historical period you choose is a subtle form of difficulty level. The manual explains fairly clearly the nature of each era, so choose for yourself, but I'd advise you to begin on the default level of the 1660's. As for nationality, you're really looking at either English or French, as the Spanish don't condone piracy, and the Dutch have too few ports. The matter of levels — appprentice through to swashbuckler — is one of ambition against experience i.e. play around on apprentice to get the feel of the game, but for a serious character, start on journeyman at the very least. This is necessary, as you must use all of your life to accumulate wealth; starting on apprentice, you will 'waste' precious months earning money for your friends. There is also a danger that you will start to believe you're virtually invincible, which will lead to a very rude awakening on the latter levels.

SHIP COMBAT

Undoubtedly the first notable event that will befall you is that your ship will be involved in a fight. Firstly, ensure that you use the correct flagship: this really means a fore'n'aft ship or a frigate (you should be so lucky!), as anything else is not manoeuvrable enough.

Try to avoid blasting battles — basically cannons are bad news all round; more often than not, you simply end up with two totally crippled ships and not many men. You must therefore try to ram the opposing ship as soon as possible, even if it means taking a broadside or two in the process. Generally, the best tactic is head straight for him, if you're outnumbered try to hit him a couple of times in the approach, and cut him off if he tries to run.

The best method of avoiding cannon-fire, should you tackle a cannon-happy captain, or a fort, is to head in your quickest direction, provided this isn't straight towards him, until he fires, then turn rapidly away from that heading. Enemies tend to anticipate your position, so you should find shots eventually land some distance from your ship. If your quickest direction is straight towards him, then either go in quick (as advised above) or run away if he's got some serious firepower. Note that shots from 24 + guns can sink fore'n'aft ships in two hits.

LAND BATTLE

If naval attacks are costly in terms of ships, then land battles are in terms of men. Generally, land attacks on towns are not preferred, as naval

SEND YOUR POKES TIPS + MAPS
TO: PLAY TO WIN
C.U. PRIORY COURT
30-32 FARRINGDON LANE EC1R 3AU

ES

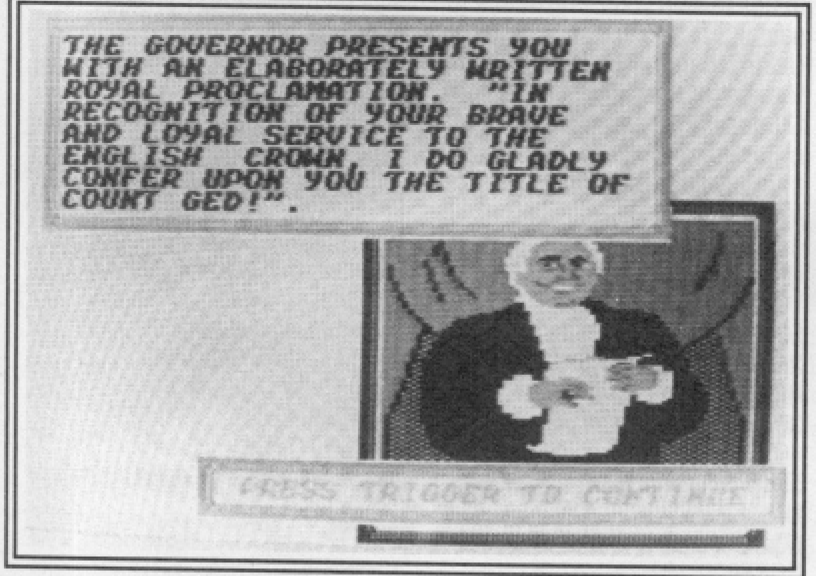
battles have only the one enemy to attack, whereas land-based have many. The main use of land attacks is to take on a much larger force: using only two groups of 30-40 men it is possible to take over 200-300 soldiers. First you wait with your men until the enemy is far out of town. You then move both groups into a forest; the enemy should stop moving when it can no longer see you. You now run one group away from the woods, and the town, hopefully to a marshy area; all the enemy forces should follow you, to attack. Once everybody is nicely stuck in the marsh, and your decoy group are being slaughtered, run the other group straight back towards the town. The enemy will be unable to catch you in time and you should then be able to attack the fort with your main group. You will need to be a good swordsman if you are to defeat a large town with the townsfolk are usually unskilled and easily hacked with a long sword. This is obviously a very simplified plan of attack, but seems to be the most successful, especially if you can get two groups (out of 3) to the town fort.

SWORD FIGHTING

As I mentioned before, this is what everything that's important depends on. It is difficult to advise specific tactics for swordplay, as opponents vary in tactics: townsfolk tend to stand there and take it, guards and ship captains mix it, while VIPs and powerful pirates will be cunningly aggressive. However, the numbers mentioned above, but the underlying tactic is rhythm — either a series of slashes, or a hit-parry-hit-parry pattern, waiting until the enemy is in the right position. Having said this, it is virtually impossible to plan a combat beforehand — you need to know what sort of fighter you're up against. Weapon choice is also fairly difficult to define exactly — there are many factors. The long sword will cope with just about any situation, being a compromise of the other two weapons; the cutlass is good when you have superior numbers, an unskilled opponent, or need to get results quickly; however the rapier is good for keeping a better swordsman at bay while your men set about his, or (rarely) for taking on a hopeless task in which you must not be hit. Most people find a particular weapon and style to suit themselves, and can develop this into an effective technique.

A note on seemingly impossible fights: it does not matter by how much you are outnumbered, but more, the absolute number of men you have. Take as a measure of your quality as a swordsman the number of men you need to defeat large groups (150 men+): you should never be defeated if you have over 100 men going into a swordfight, providing you fight intelligently. And are doing well if you can always survive with around 50.

▼ **The governor will dish out rewards**



RUNNING AWAY

There are times in sword combat when you will realise you are fighting a lost cause (shaken, 15 men remaining, you know the sort of thing). At this point RUN — your reputation will suffer, but at least you'll still be in one piece. For this reason it is often best to fight close to the right side of the screen, to make a quick withdrawal easier.

SAVING THE GAME

It is worth mentioning at this point that regular saving of the game position is essential. As with many Microprose games, as soon as you feel you have achieved something — e.g. captured a town, been promoted, rescued a family member etc. — save the game; you never know when you'll run into a pirate-hunting frigate. If you do this regularly, you can develop a career as an 'undefeated' and 'uninjured' pirate, reloading your last position whenever some ill fate befalls you.

HOW TO LOSE FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE
(Recruitment and Dividing Plunder)

When it comes to the horribly democratic time of dividing up the booty, it is a good idea to go off and get a lot of your men killed. This is best achieved by having a land battle with a ludicrously large town, letting all but one of your groups get slaughtered (leave one near the edge of the screen) and then returning to your base town. Although you don't get an increased share of the gold, the surviving men do, and will therefore be very happy; your reputation will consequently be enhanced when the plunder is divided, making later recruitment easier. This tactic is also advisable when the crew are becoming mutinous and/or deserting.

HOW TO GET RICH QUICK

Basically the fastest way to get rich is to plunder nice juicy towns. Not only does this increase your bank balance, but it also greatly increases your prestige and promotion prospects.

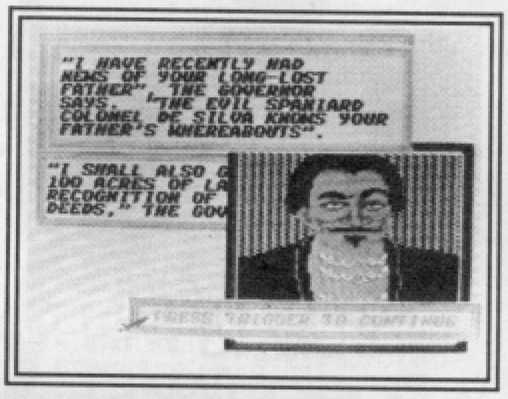
Take good note of town details, preferring those with no forts (just a straight swordfight to win all that dough!) and those recently struck by malaria or indians. Note also that attacking towns is a very good way to start a war and generally make yourself unpopular with the country concerned, so pick just one or two nationalities to attack (the Spanish are usually the best, as they have the greatest number of potential targets!).

If you're really going to move up in the world, though, capturing a town for your country is just about second-to-none. To achieve this end, you must finish the battle with men equal to approx. 10% of the town's population e.g. you must have over 200 men to take control of a town with 2000 inhabitants. If the town has forts, naval attacks are usually better for this purpose, as land battles tend to be expensive in terms of men. Alternatively you can get rich by raiding the mysterious Silver Train and Treasure Fleet — all this involves is plundering the town they are currently in. If you arrive at the town at the right time you will be given the message, along with the initial town entry options, that one or other of them is in town. The rest is down to your militia.

FAMILY LIFE

Whatever you do during the game DON'T GET MARRIED! (Good advice there, from the CU Family Planning Clinic) — at least not until near your final retirement. If you keep chatting up the various governors' daughters, they will become informers for you, telling you where the Silver Train and Treasure Fleet are. They usually start doing this once you are of equal or greater rank than their present boyfriend (i.e. the point at which they would marry you if you asked). Having a network of these informers right across the map (literally, a girl in every port) is clearly far more useful than having just the one wife stuck on a solitary island — her info may be redundant by the time you actually reach the treasure towns, if the ships are back in Spain or Peru.

The other side of family life, namely your lost relations, is very important. You must try to rescue all four members of your family, as each has a piece of treasure map to an Inca fortune. You must try to find one Inca treasure from each member's map; if you don't, then the next member's piece of map simply enhances the one you already have, effectively losing you 100,000. For this reason it is worth saving the game just before retrieveing any family member, as the maps are randomly drawn each time: you may fine that the 'first' time you find them, the map they have is completely unrecognizable, whereas, the 'second' time it's very familiar. 'Guess everyone's got to cheat once in a while.



PLAY TO WIN

CORRECTIONS

WIZBALL

Line 40 should have read
40 DATA 32,44,247,32,108,245,
169,0,141,61,4,169,208,141,62

WONDERBOY

Line 40 should read
40 DATA 32,44,247,169,233,
141,205,3
Line 80 should read
80 DATA 208,141,234,2,76,208,
3,169

ENDURO RACER

Line 200 should read
200 DATA 169,207,141,41,3,
32,44,247

MAG MAX

Line 60 should read
60 DATA 60,141,87,3,169,47,
141,88,3,76,0,8

SHADOW SKIMMER

Line 40 should have read
40 SYS35721

Whoops what a mega cock-up! I'm talking about the number of mistakes on our pokes column from September, which had you all pulling your hair out in large clumps — particularly the Wizball one. So here are the corrections and to make up for the hassle, a first CU is proud to present the first Amiga poke to appear anywhere. There'll be more to come. Meanwhile 64 owners if you're struggling with Mega Apocolypse there's something for you too . . .

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C64

AIRWOLF II

I read with interest the review of Elite's *Trio*. In particular the *Airwolf 2* review. I couldn't agree more with the fact that it's now too hard. As I wrote the program I should know. I didn't want it to begin where it did as you get no chance to gain any powers which is essential later on. However for one reason or another, possibly to show the vertical scrolling, I was told it had to start later on than I had intended.

Anyway, to rectify the situation I noted the pokes needed to alter the game to its original playable state. It's still not easy but it's easier and it shows some more of the graphics. STAGE 2 if by far the worst graphical section.

I've also included the poke for infinite lives.

The 4 pokes needed to alter the game to start position are

POKE 16960,00:POKE 16965,00:POKE 17145,00:POKE 17150,124

Enter all 4 pokes or the game goes wrong.

Lives POKE — 49885,lives
SYS 49467 restart

Be careful not to poke this with too high a number (ie 255) as getting an extra man without losing a life will reset the lives to zero.

I hope these pokes help your readers enjoy the game more.

Stuart Cook
Aberdeen

CATABALL

This program below allows you to choose some of the following things to help you along in this game:
Unlimited number of Cataballs.
Number of Cataballs
Number of balloons to be collected.
Immunity to nasty sprites.
Infinite time.

```
0 REM * CATABALL CHEATS BY
DAVID SLACK *
10 PRINT CHR$(147):FORA=
560 TO 621
20 READ B:POKEA,B:C=C+
B:NEXT
30 IF C=6296 THEN 50
40 PRINT"ERROR":END
50 PRINT"WOULD YOU LIKE
UNLIMITED LIVES Y/N"
60 INPUT U$:IF U$="Y" THEN
POKE600,169
70 PRINT"HOW MANY LIVES DO)
YOU WANT 1-255"
80 INPUT N:IF N>255 OR B<1
THEN GOTO100
120 POKE605,B
130 PRINT"DO YOU WANT TO
BE IMMUNE TO SPRITES Y/N"
140 INPUT I$:IF I$="Y" THEN
POKE610,19
150 PRINT"DO YOU WANT
INFINITE TIME Y/N"
160 INPUT T$:IF T$="Y"THEN
POKE 615,189
170 PRINT"INSERT TAPE AND
PRESS A KEY"
180 WAIT198,1:POKE198,0:
SYS560
190 DATA
76,104,225,169,76,
141,242,3,169,69
200 DATA 141,243,3,169,2,
141,244,3,76,13
210 DATA
8,169,82,141,26,4,169,2,
141,27
220 DATA 4,76,0,4,169,2,141,
10,97,169
230 DATA 198,141,158,97,169,
10,141,191,94,169
240 DATA 3,141,67,94,169,
222,141,87,98,76
250 DATA 0,80.
```

Now that you have typed in the program, run it. When the game loads the computer will not say that it has found the game, just wait until the READY prompt appears, type SYS563 (RETURN) and the rest of the game should now load and run.

GREAT GURIANDS

This program below will allow you to either specify the number of lives that you want, or have unlimited lives at your disposal.

```
0 REM GREAT GURIANOS
CHEATS BY D. SLACK
10 PRINT CHR$ (147): FOR
A=560 TO 606
20 PRINT B: POKEA,B:C=C+
B:NEXT
30 IF C=4769 THEN 50
40 PRINT"ERROR":END
50 PRINT"HOW MANY LIVES DO
YOU WANT 1-16"
60 INPUT L:IF >16 OR L¯ THEN
50
70 POKE595,L
80 PRINT"NOW WOULD YOU
LIKE UNLIMITED LIVES Y/N"
90 INPUT N$:IF N$="Y" THEN
POKE600,189
100 PRINT"INSERT TAPE AND
PRESS A KEY"
110 WAIT198,1:POKE198,0:
SYS560
120 DATA 76,104,225,169,76,
141,242,3,169,69
130 DATA 141,243,3,169,2,141,
244,3,76,13
140 DATA 8,169,82,141,45,130,
169,2,141,46
150 DATA 130,76,16,130,169,3,
141,77,16,169
160 DATA 222,141,87,70,76,0,4
```

Now that you have typed in the program, run it. When the game

loads the computer will not say that prompt appears, type SYS563 (RETURN) and the rest of the game should now load and run.

LIVING DAYLIGHTS

This program will give the player the option of having infinite lives or infinite energy or a set number of lives. Type it in then save it to tape and follow the onscreen instructions.

```
10  REM FIDDLED BY ANDY
GRIFO
20 SYS 65371:PRINT CHR$(5)
30 FOR A=18152 TO
18192:READ B:POKE A,B:NEXT
40 PRINT "007's HACK PACK
(CHOOSE OPTION)"
50 PRINT "(A) INFINITE LIVES
(B) INFINITE ENERGY"
60 PRINT "(C) A SET NUMBER
OF LIVES"
70 INPUT "I'M WAITING";A$
80 IF A$="A" THEN POKE
18181,173:GOTO 140
90 IF A$="B"THEN 140
100 IF A$="C" THEN 120
110 RUN
120 INPUT "ENTER NUMBER OF
LIVES";L
130 POKE 18185,L:POKE
18178,173:POKE 18181,173
140 INPUT "PRESS (RETURN)
TO LOAD";R
150 SYS 18152
160 DATA 32,44,247,32,108,
245,169,121
170 DATA 141,218,3,169,89,
141,219,3
180 DATA 169,30,141,220,3,76,
167,2
190 DATA 169,173,141,38,17,
141,86,38
200 DATA 169,5,141,2,62,238,
32,208,96
```

MEGA APOCALYPSE

```
10 REM MEGA HACKS BY ANDY
GRIFO
20 FOR A=53209 TO 53261:
READ B:POKE A,B:NEXT
30 SYS 53209
40 DATA 32,44,247,32,108,245,
169,76,141
50 DATA 56,3,169,241,141,57,
3,169,207
60 DATA 141,58,3,76,21,64,
72,169,0,141
70 DATA 178,3,169,208,141,
179,3,104,76
80 DATA 81,3,72,169,173,141,
161,126,141
90 DATA 253,126,104,32,191,
3,96
```

P.S. I wasn't put off by John Twiddy's (maker of the loader) message which read: "Hackers F**K off and die!"

ROAD RUNNER

```
10 REM FIDDLED BY ANDY
GRIFO
20 FOR A=53216 TO 53255:
READ B:POKE A,B:NEXT
30 SYS 53216
40 DATA 32,44,247,32,108,245,
691,243
50 DATA 141,134,9,169,207,
141,135,9
60 DATA 76,16,8,169,0,141,63,
16
70 DATA 169,208,141,64,16,76,
0,16
80 DATA 169,165,141,233,168,
76,0,128
```

QUARTET

```
10 REM HACKED BY ANDY
GRIFO
20 FOR A=53208 TO
53260:READ B:POKE A,B:NEXT
30 SYS 53219
40 DATA 169,49,141,159,2,169,
234,141,160
50 DATA 2,96,169,216,141,40,
3,169,207,141
60 DATA 41,3,32,44,247,32,
108,245,169,0
70 DATA 141,233,2,169,208,
141,234,2,76,81
80 DATA 3,169,173,141,202,
118,169,96,141
90 DATA 153,139,76,0,208
```

The above listing will give you infinite time and knock out sprite collision.

RE-BOUNDER

I have been very busy on Re-Bounder and have come up with a listing for infinite lives. I hope it will help your readers complete the game.

Type this listing in, run it and load the game for infinite lives.

```
10 REM RE-BOUNDER HACK BY
G. HOLDHAM
20 PRINT CHR$(147)
30 FOR FR=14080 TO
14164:READ A:POKE F,A:NEXT F
40 SYS 14080
50 DATA 32,44,247,32,108,245,
169,19,141
60 DATA 134,9,169,55,141,
135,9,76,16
70 DATA 8,169,76,141,45,1,
169,37,141
80 DATA 46,1,169,55,141,47,
1,76,0,1,169
90 DATA 49,32,63,1,162,0,189,
58,55,157
100 DATA 0,4,232,224,32,208,
245,76,0
110 DATA 4,169,51,32,63,1,
169,52,32
120 DATA 63,1,169,234,141,
36,145,141,37
130 DATA 145,141,38,145,76,
16,128,0,0,0
```

OINK

For these pokes you can either load OINK and use a reset switch or type in the following listing, run it and load the game. When it has loaded you and reset the computer by pressing 'X' to terminate on the second screen, but instead of pressing 'Y' or 'N', press 'Z' which will reset the computer allowing you to enter the pokes.

```
0 REM * BUILT IN RESET BY
DAVID SLACK *
10 FOR Y=679 TO 746
20 READ D:POKEY,D:A=A+
D:NEXT Y
30 IF A=7568 THEN SYS679
40 PRINT "ERROR IN
DATA":END
50 DATA 32,44,247,169,183,
141,245,3,169
55 DATA 2,141,246,3,76,82,3,
169,196,141
60 DATA 55,5,169,2,141,56,5,
76,0,4,169
65 DATA 128,141,251,65,169,
31,141,252,65
70 DATA 162,15,189,219,2,157,
127,31,202
75 DATA 208,247,76,0,64,32,
100,7,201,26
80 DATA 208,7,169,55,133,1,
76,226,252,96
```

PETE'S PIMPLE

POKE28095,0-255 — NUMBER OF LIVES
POKE31991,227 — UNLIMITED LIVES
POKE32215,0 — IMMUNE TO ATTACKERS

RUBBISHMAN

POKE35487,0-255 — NUMBER OF LIVES
POKE39923,227 — UNLIMITED LIVES
POKE43574,0 — IMMUNE TO FLYING OBJECTS

TOM THUG

POKE47069,0-255 — NUMBER OF LIVES
POKE47774,0 — UNLIMITED LIVES
POKE47426,1 — IMMUNE TO ANYTHING

END GAME

POKE16433,12 — FILLS ALL PANELS TO END THE GAME

Now that you have entered all the pokes that you want, you can restart the game by typing SYS 16384.

PLAY TO WIN

AMIGA

STARGLIDER

Here it is the first ever Amiga hack. All the instructions are in the program. Remember the Amiga doesn't use line numbers.

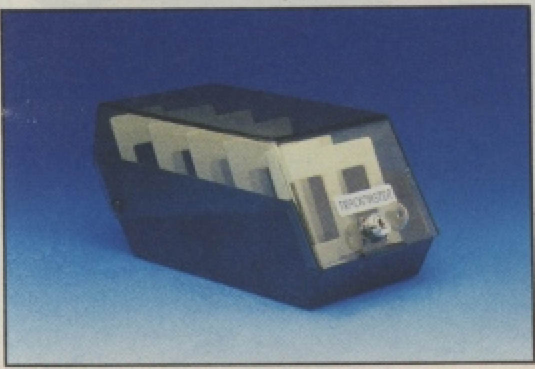
```
REM AMIGA HACKS BY ANDY
GRIFO
REM THIS PROGRAM WILL GIVE
YOU INFINITE SHIELDS
REM YOU SHOULD ONLY PLAY
STARGLIDER WITH THE MUSIC
REM ON AND NO EFFECTS
REM ONLY USE THIS ON A
SPARE BACKUP COPY
REM  ———  REM BOOT UP THE
AMIGA AND THEN LOAD IN
AMIGA BASIC
REM THEN TYPE THIS
PROGRAM IN AND SAVE IT TO
DISK
REM AND THEN TYPE RUN AND
FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS.
REM PART 2 WILL BE COMING
SOON.
REM NO NICKING THIS LISTING
WITHOUT MY PERMISSION
OPEN "R",#1,"STARGLIDER:
SGLOAD",1
FIELD#1,1 AS N$
FOR A=834 TO 852:READ
B:RSET N$=CHR$ (B):PUT#1,
A:NEXT A CLOSE#1
OPEN "R",#1,"STARGLIDER:
SG",1
FIELD#1,1 AS N$
FOR A=751 TO 752:READ B:RSET
N$=CHR$(B):PUT#1,A:NEXT A
CLOSE#1
PRINT "THAT WASN'T TOO BAD
WAS IT?"
PRINT "YOU CAN NOW BOOT
STARGLIDER"
DATA 72,97,99,107,115,32,66,
121,32,65,110
DATA 100,121,32,71,114,105,
102,111,234,96
```

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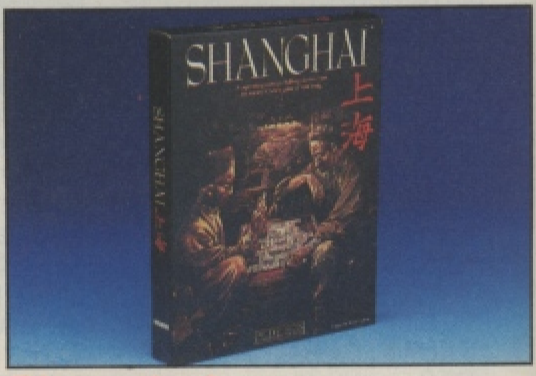


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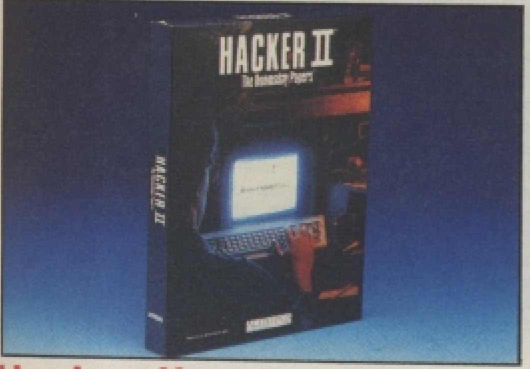
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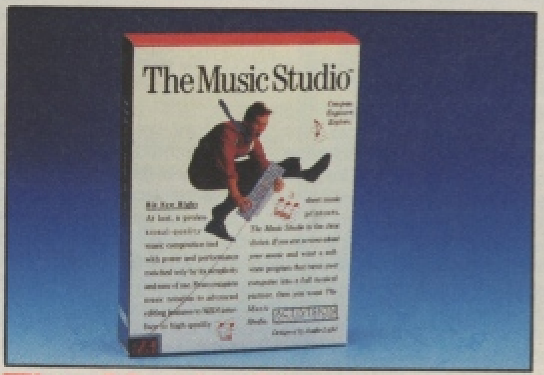
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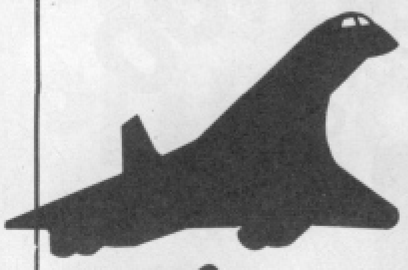
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Here is an adventure set on a planet devoted to the recycling of refuse. You have been charged with a murder you did not commit, and cast away for life to run the plant. Guess what – your job is to escape. Here is a reasonable science fiction background, with plenty of scope for some interesting graphics and some original puzzles, to make a decent game. But as the ratings show, despite its budget price, it fails.

Why, and what exactly do the ratings mean? I have never really explained this, and perhaps Life-Term provides a good opportunity to do so.

First, let us take the *Graphics* rating. Speaks for itself really. Your Magnetic Scroll type graphics would normally rank 10 on the scale – until and unless something even better comes up. *Life-term* has graphics that are rather unimaginative, lacking in variety of colour, and often consist of squarish shapes and straight lines which are rather abstract and lacking in meaning. Let's be generous – rating 4. After all, they were probably only put in to sell the game.

Next comes that catch-all, Playability. As far as an adventure is concerned, this is mainly a guide to the range of vocabulary provided, and the command structure. Are the words that come naturally to the player in the context of the game, recognised by the program? Plus a few synonyms for good measure? Of course, there's bound to be a number of unrecognised words, even in a top-notch adventures.

Also under Playability, come the responses to the player's commands. Are they helpful? Do they add interest and excitement? Have they a touch of humour? Is there ALWAYS some reply? There is an intimate link between vocabulary and messages, and in *Life-Term*, invalid commands elicit the response YOU CAN'T (unhelpful – WHY can't I?) and unrecognised words produce PERHAPS ANOTHER WORD? Not quite so bad, at least we know it's time to get the thesaurus out, but it would have been better had the 'bad' word been mentioned. Some commands, though, seem to get absorbed. LIE ON BUNK, for example, produced no reply except OK. But neither the location graphics, nor the description had changed, so was I lying down or not?

All was revealed with my next command: GET OFF BUNK. "It's too heavy" came the reply. Aha! So I was not on it at all, and now, having foolishly thrown away my word OFF, the parser thought I was trying to pick up the bunk! Bad! Was I operating in a two-word environment? How could I tell, the instructions did not say. And if I was, why didn't a message tell me that I had entered too many words?

Playability also encompasses the location text. Here it is fairly short. That in itself does not matter too much, if EXAMINE produced plenty of rich description. Unfortunately in *Life Term* it does not.

But before we award *Life-Term* a Playability Rating of 3, response time must be taken into account. Not bad – about GAC (Graphic Adventure Creator) speed on the whole. It's a dead giveaway when the response time is instant for a common command, and almost infinite for an unrecognised command, that the GAC is behind it. Althougn no credit is given to GAC (I dare say it would be better off that way!) I would put money on the GAC at work here. Response is enough to bring the rating up a notch, to 4.

Puzzleability! Now with this rating I don't give 10 for the impossible and 1 for the easy puzzles. I take it to be a measure of the satisfaction gained in solving them, no matter how clever they are, how subtle, how complex, or how dead simple. Of course, if I can solve none because they are all too difficult, then I would have to award 0, but otherwise, difficulty is not the criteria. For example, one of the most satisfying puzzles I have solved of late, is the demolition of the wall at the end of the damp passage, in The Lurking Horror. Dead simple – when you know how!

I am sad to relate that I didn't even manage to FIND a puzzle in *Life-Term*. I asked myself a few questions, like 'What is the bolt on the door for, when I can apparently do nothing to it?' and 'Why can't I get back inside the store room from the landing pad?'. But you see, by then I had lost interest, for my previous experience with the game had shown that there may be simply – no reason! In other words, I had become bored. Puzzleability – 1.

And finally, **Overall** means taking the price into account, along with the ratings previously awarded, and the general feel of the game. It might be argued that a duff game isn't ANY value for money, even at 10p! And so the Overall rating will tend to reflect, especially in the case of a budget adventure, that even if you don't like it, you haven't wasted an awful lot of cash. *Life-Term* costs 1.99. Not an arm and a leg. Oh, let's give it 5 overall, and forget about it, I say!

GRAPHICS:	4
PLAYABILITY:	4
PUZZLEABILITY:	1
OVERALL:	5

THE PAY OFF
64/128
Bug-Byte
Price: £1.99

You owe Luigi four grand, and if he doesn't get it next time you meet, as he so subtley puts it: "Issa concrete well for you." Luigi runs a betting shop, and you have a good tip for the 4.30 – but Luigi seems unlikely to let you win what you owe him at his own expense! So with only $50 in your pocket, you resort to crime.

This is a text adventure originally released some years ago by Atari for Atari computers. Now Bug-Byte have re-released it for Atari 800 machines, and brought out a 64 version. It strikes me that the game was never exactly sophisticated even in its own time. However, one would have thought that a re-release warranted some upgrading of what can only be described as the stone age parser, display, and the not only terse, but generally unhelpful and unfriendly reply messages.

Input is by two words, and although not presenting great difficulty, the range of vocabulary, proudly proclaimed on the title screen as being over 100 words, means that the computer is pretty fussy about which ones you use. Let's face it, 100 words these days is peanuts.

Scott Adams' classic I SEE NOTHING SPECIAL was at least logical, and even became something of a catch phrase in my neck of the woods, but here the messages are poor. NOTHING TO SEE is the sharp reply to EXAMINE (object) if there is no further detail to be offered – and it happens all too often.

Thus I found myself, halfway up a drainpipe, and climbing into a window cleaner's hoist. I couldn't get out, and in the end, resorting to my fairly old copy of the solution, I decided I was trapped by a logical flaw in the program. It seems you have to GET HOIST and then carry it – whilst still climbing the pipe! The mind boggles.

There are no graphics – this is a text only game. I've no complaints about that, but the white text on black background is fairly poorly presented. To start with it looks like a split-screen presentation, with messages scrolling below a fixed location description. But that illusion is soon shattered as play commences and the top half starts scrolling away too.

The plot is reasonable enough to make an interesting game even if it is none too inspiring. At its budget price, The *Pay Off* is still not a bad buy – but what a pity it wasn't upgraded into a format more acceptable by today's standards.

GRAPHICS:	n/a
PLAYABILITY:	5
PUZZLEABILITY:	5
OVERALL:	6

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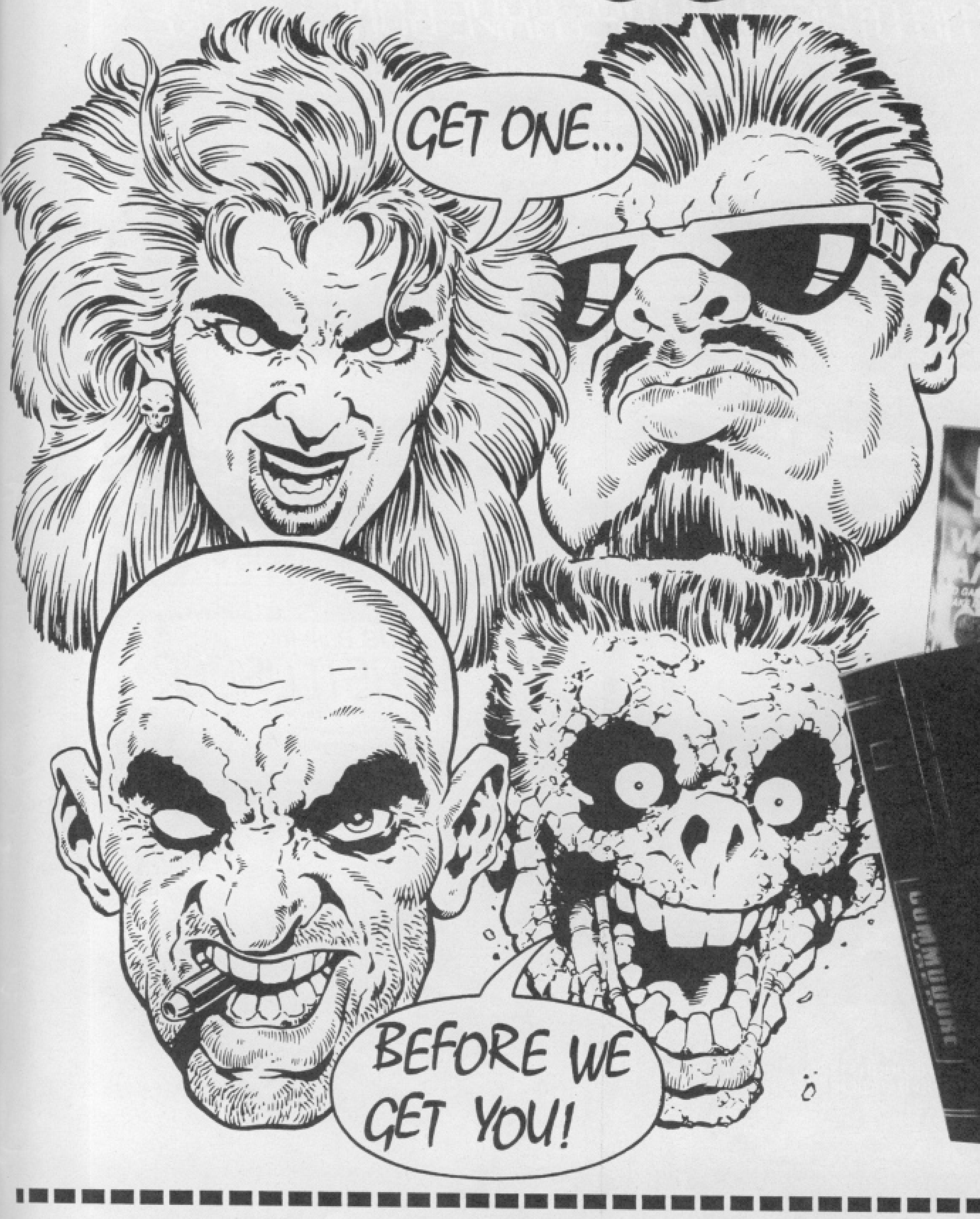
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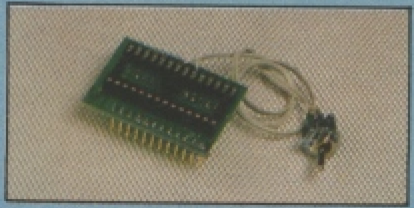
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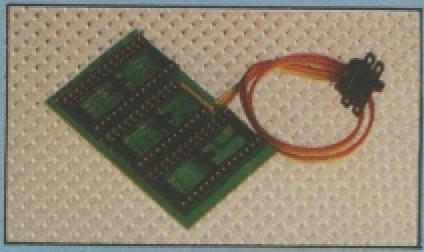




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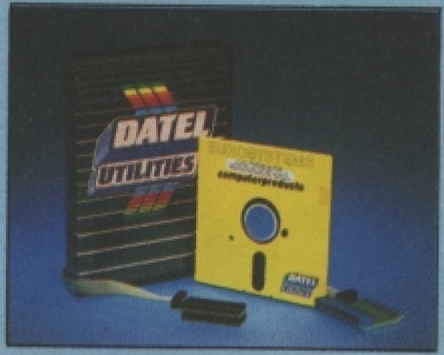


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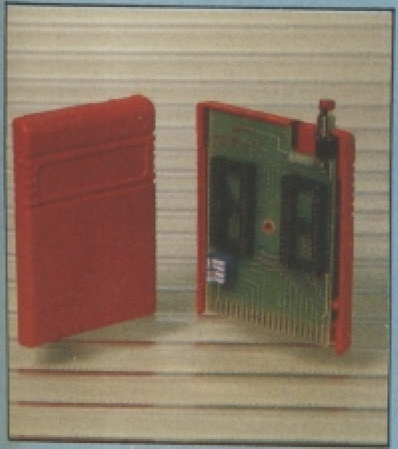
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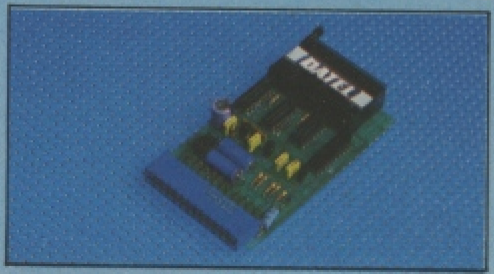


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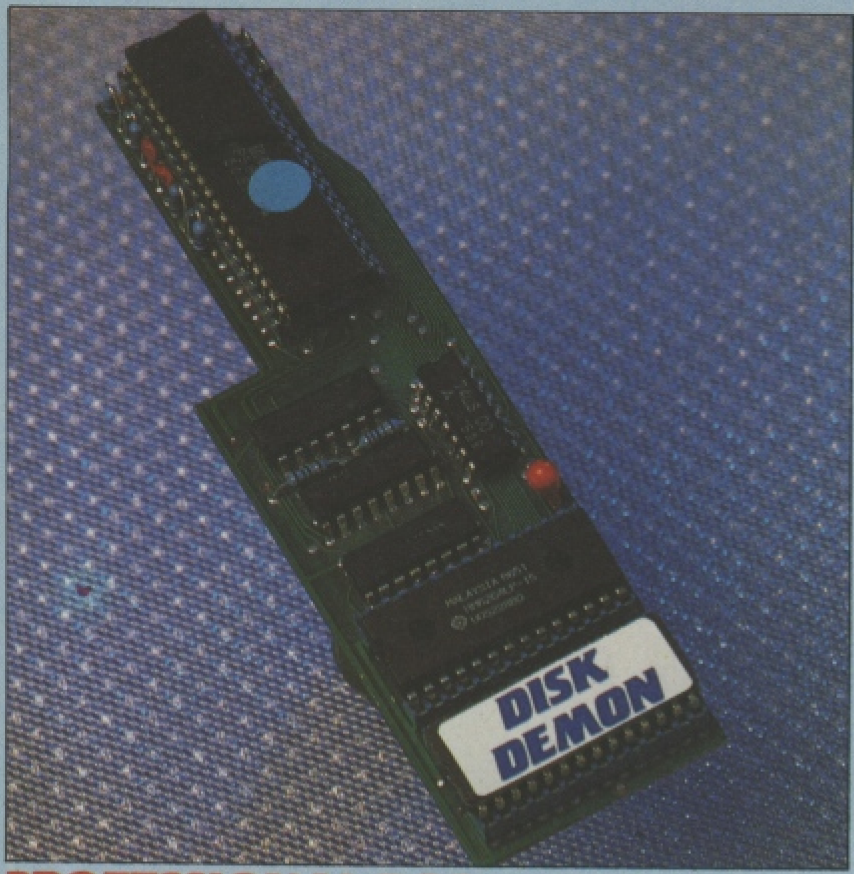
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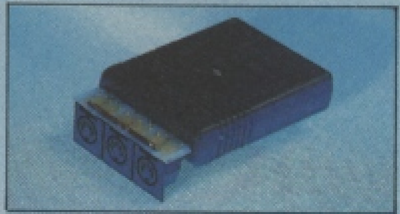
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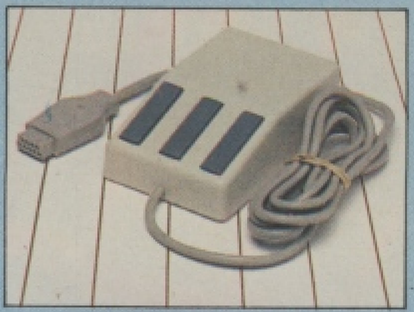


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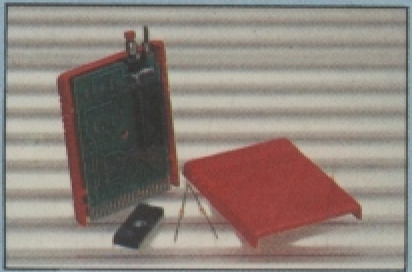
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MONTH

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Tommy's Tips

Reset address

I own a C64 and I have a reset switch and there are some questions I want to ask.
1. Can I make the border multi-coloured? I have found out that when some games load the border looks like it is multi-coloured because of lines. But I think it is because the border is flashing very fast so I don't think it is really multi-coloured. Is there a poke or a program to make it multi-coloured?
2. If I went out and bought a new game and wanted 255 lives I have to know the start address of the game and the number the lives are stored to. Each game has a different number. If I try to reset it and guess the start address some numbers make the computer lock up and I have to load it again. Unless I reset it again. Is there a program to tell me the start address of a machine code game?
I would be very grateful if you can answer my questions.
Alexander Hunt,
Welling, Kent

You are correct when you say the border only looks multi-coloured because it is changing very fast. The programs that do this, mostly loader programs, use the raster scan interrupt to change the colour of the whole border every few scan lines. However, because the colour is being changed so rapidly during one complete scan of the whole screen, the effect is one of bands of different colours; so no POKE for that I'm afraid.

As to your second query, there is no simple way to determine the start address of any game. The only methods are to use a 'break' cartridge, then use a monitor program to search the likely memory locations, or to see if a SYS call is included in the 'loader' program.

As for the locations of 'lives' totals, these will vary enormously from game to game. Some software houses may use similar locations in each of their games for efficiency, so you may be able to build up a pattern of likely locations after a while, but there is no short cut (other than to reading PLAY TO WIN)

Robot request

I am programming my Commodore 64, I am having trouble getting the Poke codes for the user Port. I want the Poke codes because I am doing a project at school in computing.
I am thinking of doing my project by making a robot arm do something. Please can you tell me the poke codes for the user Port and where I could get a robot arm for the C64 and how much it would cost. Thank you.
B. Key,
Tamworth, Staffs.

There certainly used to be a number of robot arms available for the 64, but things seem to have gone very quiet on that front recently. Commotion do the 'Beasty' interface and robot arm, as well as 'Alfred'; a 5-axis arm available either ready-built or in kit form. However, while the Beasty system costs around £120, Alfred will set you back over £250 for the kit and over £300 for the assembled version. There is control software available as well. Do check the availability of items and their prices as my list is a little out of date: tel no is 01-804 1378.

As for the User-port addresses, the port is controlled by two registers; the first is the Data Direction Register (DDR) which is set at 56579 and determines whether the individual lines on the port itself are inputs or outputs. If the corresponding 'bit' in the DDR is set to 1 then the line is an output, otherwise it's an input. The actual register to set lines and read lines is at 56577, remembering that each line can be set or read independently of any other, by using the AND and OR operators. For example POKE 56577, PEEK(56577) or 4 will set the line PB2 line to ON, while POKE 56577, PEEK(56577) AND 251 will turn the same line OFF.

Football fix

I am writing a football game and wish to have a randomised pick of teams like Liverpool vs Everton, and the next week a different randomised game. I have no idea how to do this, PLEASE HELP ME!
F. McGaugh,
Ashtead, Surrey

The easiest way to do this is to store the teams in an array and then use the RND command to select the teams to play each other. You will also need to have a second array to show when a team has been selected so that you don't pick it again. The following example will give you the outline:

```
10 DIM TEAM$ (6), used (6)
100 FOR LOOP = 1 TO 3
110 T1 = INT (RND (1) *6) + 1
120 IF USED (T1) = 1 THEN 110
130 USED (T1) = 1
140 T2 = INT (RND (1) *6) + 1
150 IF USED (T2) = 1 THEN 140
160 USED (T2) = 1
PRINT TEAM$ (T1); "WILL PLAY";
TEAM$ (T2)
180 NEXT LOOP
```

By using several (or multi-dimensional) arrays you can have different divisions etc. You must ensure that you set up the array TEAM$ with the relevant names, using DATA statements before using the above code and if you are going to run the program more than once (unless you type RUN each time) then you will also have to reset all elements of the array USED to zero each time.

Get it

I own a C64 but I can't understand the 'GET' statement. Okay so 10 GETA$:IFA$ = "" THEN 10 gets a letter, but if you change A$ to A (to get a number) it comes up 'TYPE MISMATCH ERROR'! I then have to change the /""/ to '00' but if you press a letter, it stops the program. That means that people can LIST the program. (That's just what I don't want).
I've POKEd 808,234 but someone can easily POKE 808,237.
Can you help?
Timmy Waugh,
Portsmouth

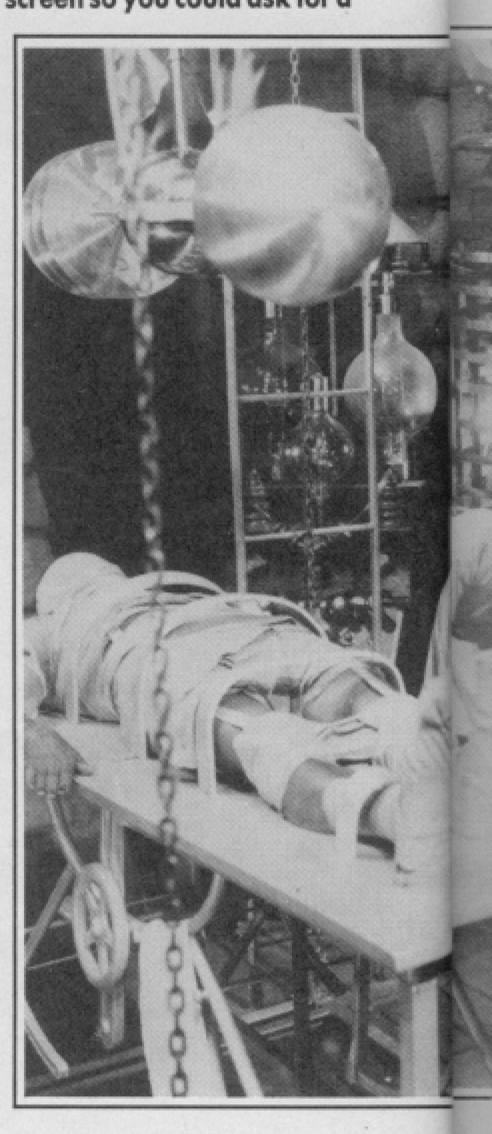
The easiest way round this problem is to read everything in a GET statement as if it were a character, then convert it to a number if that is what you really want. That way you can incorporate your own traps to stop the user from typing anything you don't want him to, like letters instead of numbers. The following example shows the basic idea:

```
10 GET A$: IF A$ = "" THEN 10
20 IF ASC (A$) <48 OR ASC (A$) ) 57
THEN GOSUB 100: GOTO 10
30 A = ASC (A$) – 48
40 PRINT A
50 GOTO 10
100 PRINT "THAT WASN'T A NUMBER
KEY STUPID!"
110 RETURN
```

If you want an easy 'break-out' line in the above example just add 15 IF A$ = 'E' THEN END and then you can stop the program by pressing the 'E' key. Apart from that, any attempt to press a character key will output a suitable warning, while only number keys (0-9) will be printed. Assuming you have disabled STOP and RESTORE, this will at least ensure that you don't get a BASIC error when people hit the wrong keys in future.

What's the password

I have a Commodore 64 and am wondering if it is possible to change the message on the powering-up screen so you could ask for a



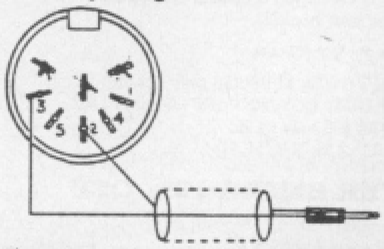
password before you could use the computer?
J. Cooney, Dublin

You can't actually alter the power-up message unless you are using an auto-start cartridge. This is because the computer power-up message is incorporated in the ROM and will alwasy appear before you can actually enter any program to change it. The only way you could achieve your aim of requesting a password before any use could be made of the computer would be to burn an EPROM containing the necessary code (plus the auto-start code of 195, 194, 205, 56, 48 starting at address 32772). The EPROM would then have to be mounted on a cartridge unit, addressed so that it started at 32768; the first two bytes being the jump address of the start of the actual program code.

Of course, the obvious answer to anyone who didn't know the password is to remove the cartridge before powering up, so you would also have to incorporate a check value within the cartridge which is accessed by the programs you wish to protect from being run by unauthorised users. The programs could then be set to crash if the cartridge was not present when they were run. however, this is obviously not feasible if you are talking about using commercial programs rather than ones you have written yourself.

Sound

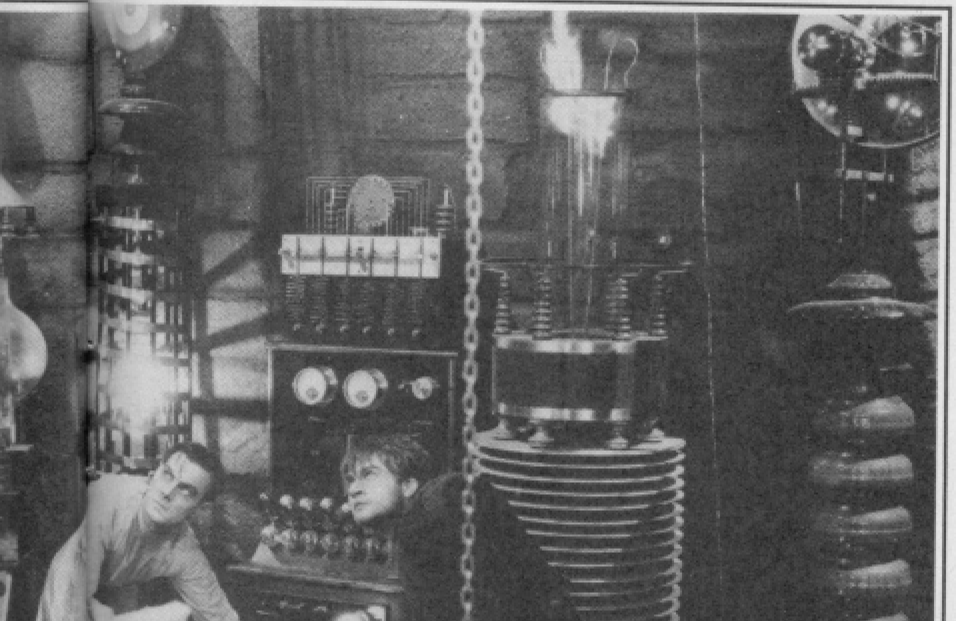
● Which pins of the Audio/ Video port of the 64 should be connected to an external amplifier to improve the sound quality? I consulted the user manual, but the diagram showed a different configuration of pins to the port on my 64. Could you also let me know whether the output is high or low impedence. Thank you.
B. Reilly, Brighton



The pin configuration is as the manual, except that the socket on the computer has several more pins than the diagram. If you ignore the top two pins and the middle pin you will find that the remaining pins are the same as the manual. Audio Out is pin Three and Ground is pin Two.

If these two pins are connected by a screened cable as shown in the diagram below, they can be connected to an audio amp using a 'guitar' or 'line' input, rather than a 'mic' input. For a hi-fi amp, you can buy a cable with a 5-pin DIN plug at one end and two phono at the other. Just plug them in and the connection should work.

▼ **"Now if *this* doesn't get it up and running . . ."**



Big Screen

● Could you explain to me, how to have more than one screen resident in memory, and then move from one to other?

What I mean is, think of a map larger than the screen (4 screens up — 4 down — 4 screens left and right). How do I hold the information, so that I can scroll in all directions using a joystick?
D. Peters, Coventry.

What you appear to be asking for is the ability to store a total of 81 screens in a 9 × 9 square which you can access as one BIG screen area. If I tell you that it would require about 5 MBytes of RAM to store that sort of area you will see that this is not a vary practical way of doing it.

The way to be able to scroll in all directions is to have machine code which draws the next line (vertical or horizontal) on the edge of the screen in the direction you wish to move. By reducing the screen size to 38 cols by 24 rows, this new line is created in the 'hidden area' of the screen. When you scroll the screen the new data will appear.

It is rather difficult to be able to scroll in all 4 directions since you will have to do 2 sets of drawing when moving into a corner for example and write 4 different m/c routines to do the drawing and scrolling. Not only must you draw the line, but first work out what it is you are going to display to match the relevant border. Because the whole screen is refreshed every 1/25th of a second this will be very jerky if done using Basic, but page 128 of the Programmers Reference Manual will start you off if you want to experiment.

The scrolling registers are 53270 (X-direction) and 53265 (Y-direction). In both cases Bit 3 sets the screen size while Bits 0-2 set the scroll position. Note that sprites are not affected by scrolling the screen in this way so if required to move with the screen in this way so if required to move with the screen you must make separate provisions for them.

Sprites duped

● Dear Tommy, Please tell me how to make eight different sprite characters appear on the TV screen, at once. Every time I try, I get duplicate copies of the first sprite's data, the computer won't 'read' the second, thrid, etc. chunks ot data.

Also is it possible to create more than eight sprites?
R. Mundy, Gt Malvern

What you have to do after creating your sprites is to tell the computer where to find the information. The Sprite Data Pointers are the registers you need to set and these are at addresses 2040-2047. Each of these addresses must be set to the location of the first byte of data for your sprite: for example, if the data for sprite 0 is held from 122888 to 12350 then **POKE 2040,192** will set the data pointer (1288/64 = 192).

The next sprite will be stored from 12352 to 12414 and its pointer will be set by **POKE 2041,193,** and so on . . . What has happened in your case is that you appear to have set all the sprite data pointers to the same value. Hence you get all the same sprites;

If when you set up the different sprites you can display them individually and the problem only occurs when you transfer the data to your program then you will need to find out where the sprite information is being stored in memory and set the data pointers accordingly.

AS for creating more than eight sprites, you can store the data on as many as you like (memory permitting) although the data on as many as you like (memory permitting) although the data must be in the same 16K 'page' of memory as the screen area. The limitation is that without using machine code and interrupts you cannot display more than eight at a time since there are only eight sprite data pointers.

TOMMY'S TIPS

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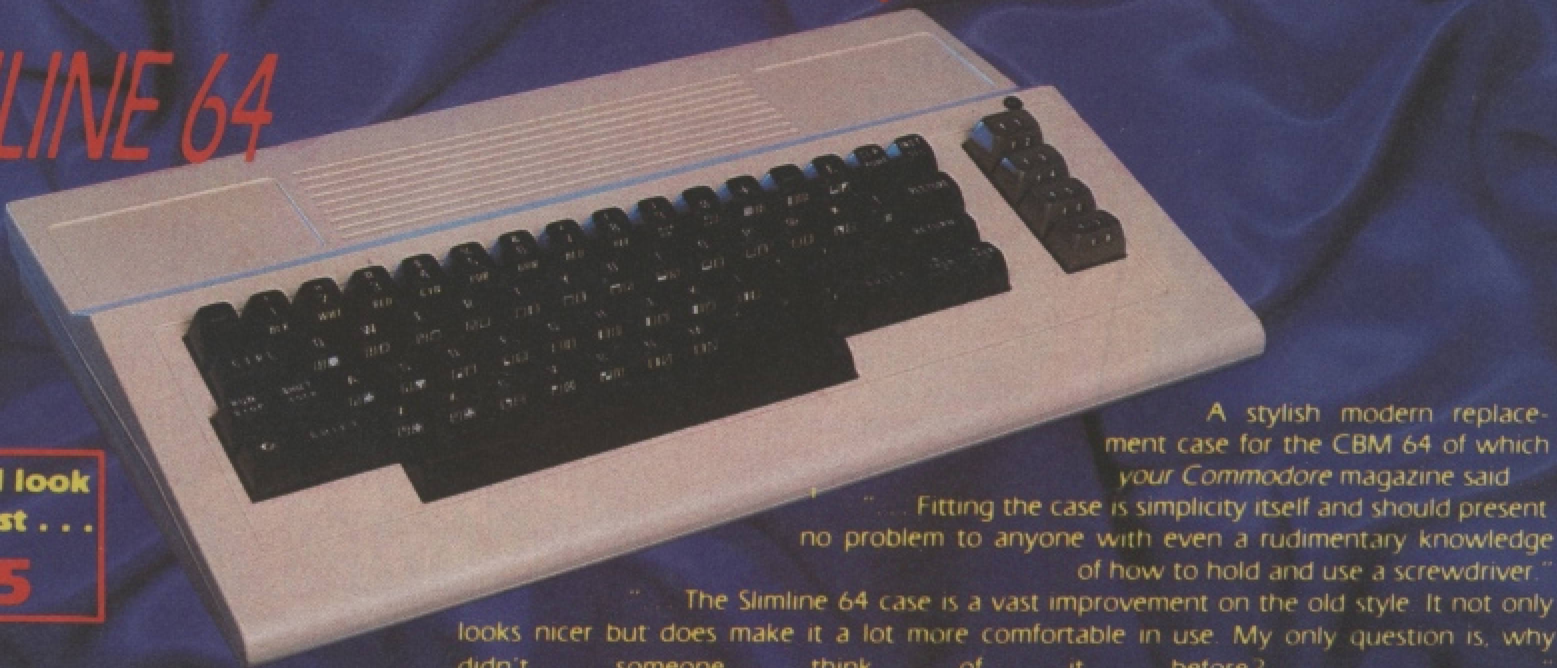
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HOT SHOTS



Monica Coghlan rushes into the PCW Show at Olympia where she is due to meet Jeffrey Archer on the Domark stand to discuss the sex for adventures scandal.

Mumble, mumble, wuww, ummumm. What's the noise? It's the sound of Hotshots with a roll of masking tape round his mouth.

The reason being that more than a few people were miffed at the various comments in the magazine and on this page. In particular the Bruce Everiss piece went down like an Argus game. So from now on when I'm taking the mick I will print in large letters the word IRONY after any story which might cause offence. Let's give it a try. *Enduro Racer* is the best conversion I've ever seen. (IRONY) There, saves confusion doesn't it?

● Tell us something you can print then, you say. Ok let's try this, *Battleships* the **Elite** game I reviewed last month and gave a Screen Star has been ditched just as it was to appear on the shelves. The reason given is that it was not up to standard. Oh dear, what a shocker! Does that mean egg all over my handsome features? Well no. The concensus of opinion is that it is a bizarre decision, with other magazines joining us with the laurels. It also seems that many people in Elite are baffled by the announcement. All this suggests to me that perhaps the game was not as copyright free as they originally thought and Elite (renowned for Putting the block on other companies) have been cut off in their prime. This leaves me with a collectors item — the only packaged 64 copy of *Battleships* still in existence. And no, you can't have it . . .

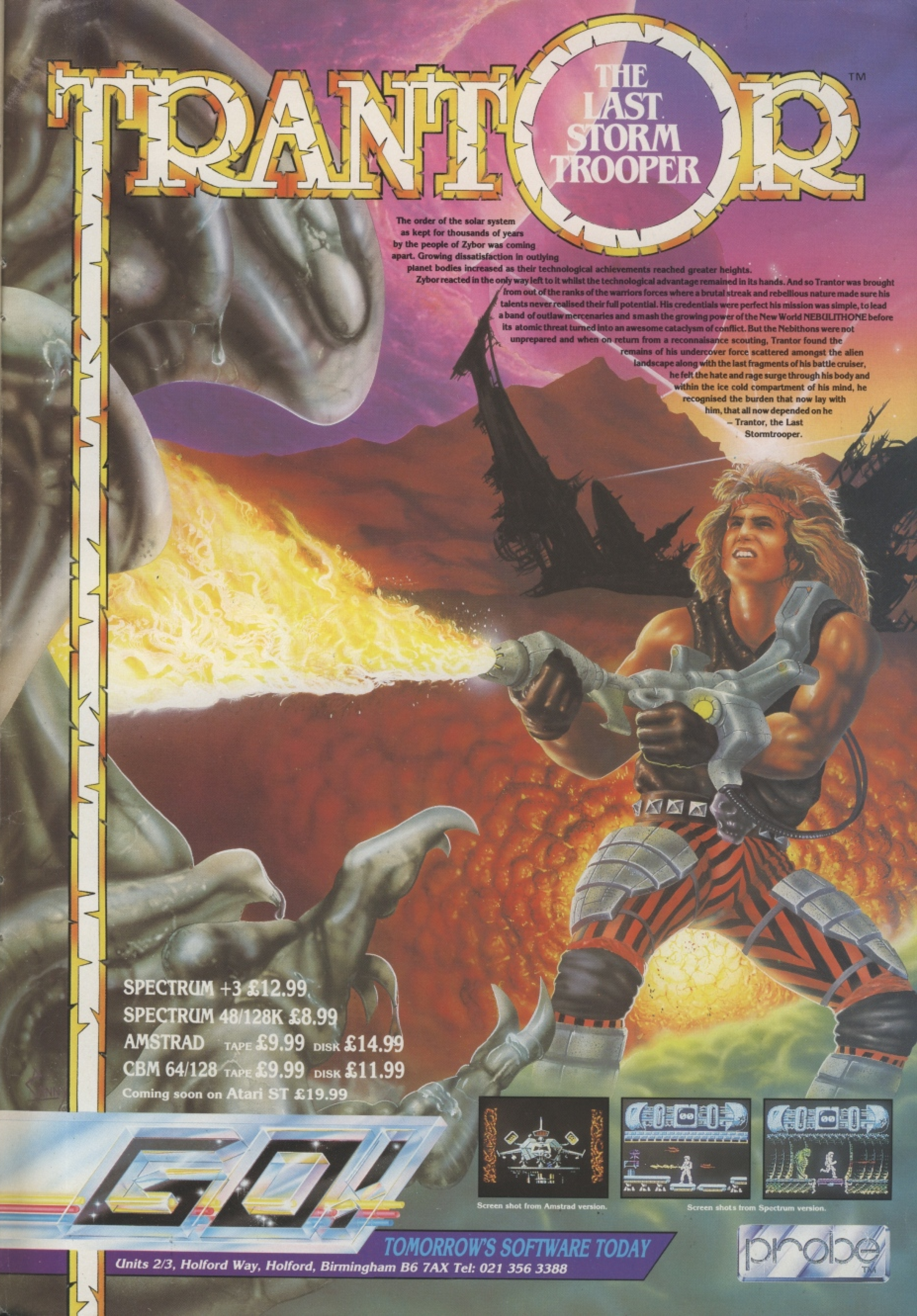
● There's trouble a-brewing over *International Karate* too. The old martial arts classic is set to appear on Elite's very own *Hit Pak* and yet has just dropped onto our desk in the guise of a cheapo from **Prism Leisure**. News of this on the System 3 freebie in Bangkok caused **Mark Cale** to explode with range and storm off to the nearest phone. Some seriously dodgy dealing has been going on but who is responsible isn't clear. And if it was, the masking tape would probably go back on anyway . . .

● That's all from me this month. I've got a few things I could tell you but it could result in concrete wellies so it's on with the sellotape till next time when I'll be bringing you a PCW Show special.



"I'm a Thai tea pot", no you're not you're Eugene Lacey on a freebie and I claim my pint.




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